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Glen A. Pierce

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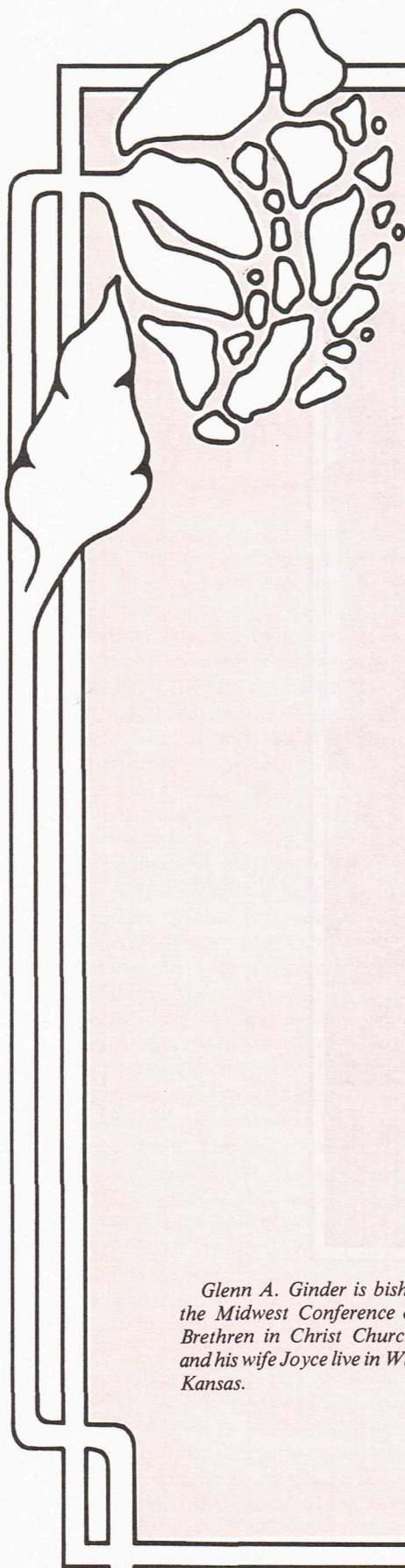
evangelical **VISITOR**

April 1988



**Jesus said, "Destroy this temple, and
in three days I will raise it up."
(But he spoke of the temple of his body.)**

LOVED T



Life. We love to see it and feel it in the glorious greening of springtime; it is the awesome spectacle dramatized in the birth of a child; we hold onto it with valiant struggle when it is threatened by illness or trauma. And in the church it is life—vibrant and responsive—that captures our imagination.

The actual definition of “a church that is alive” is a bit illusive. But it is not uncommon to hear someone say, “Now there’s a church that is alive!” When you try to discover the reason for such affirmation, comments like this surface: “I loved the singing—so strong and expressive.” “From the moment I entered, I felt warmth and acceptance from ushers, the pastor, everyone.” “The sermon was so relevant, so real; the pastor seemed to know God and understand me.”

Experiencing a church that is “alive” is so rewarding that we keep asking ourselves how it is done. What can we do in our own churches to assure that life is realized or nurtured?

Ian Pitt-Watson, professor of preaching and practical theology at Fuller Seminary, provides an insightful answer in a sermon prepared for *Preaching Today*. He eloquently expresses the conviction that life is a result of love, and illustrates his point with references to Hosea’s love for Gomer, his daughter’s rag doll, and the Velveteen Rabbit.

The concept that life is a result of love is not really so surprising a concept, at least not to a devoted husband and wife who are enraptured with the birth of a new baby, the child of their love. And the concept isn’t really new to thoughtful people of faith. They know they have been *loved to life*. Their spirits are often

inspired to praise God who loved them through the cross. These people don’t merely *quote* John 3:16. Instead, with reverence and wonder and praise, they make it a heartfelt declaration: “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” *Loved to life!*

Here then is an important clue about churches that are alive. The profound truth is that everyone of us, in our capacity to show love, holds the power to give someone life. We can indeed infuse new life into our congregations. Here is how I see it happening. Call it a conspiracy of love.

As with any other conspiracy, this one doesn’t depend on the group’s leaders to make the first move. Any two or three people, or a Sunday school class, etc., can conspire to love someone, anyone. Let’s take, for example, the usher. It could be as simple as three people agreeing to take the usher to lunch following the service three weeks in a row. Each week the host tells the usher, “Thank you; you’re doing a fine job and I appreciate it.” After those three Sundays of feeling the special love of the people he serves, you can be sure the usher will put even more vigor and enthusiasm into his ministry. In a real way, life has been breathed into at least this one facet of the church.

Then there are the trustees. Theirs is really quite a thankless job, you know—mostly errands and projects that don’t seem to rate on the spiritual plane with teaching or evangelism. Several people could get together and plan a Sunday to honor trustees. There could be a Sunday morning breakfast for the trustees. Perhaps the worship service could

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O LIFE

by Glenn A. Ginder

recognize the biblical references and theological significance of a place for worship. Someone could highlight some of the details involved in caring for a church property. A 10- to 15-minute talk on this theme, creatively prepared and presented, could prompt the members to notice the small services provided each week, and be grateful for a long while to come. An evening service with a slide story featuring pictures of churches—the quaint ones and the sprawling ones and cathedrals and chapels, the new and the old—would create considerable interest. Finally, why not identify a half dozen or so items around the church, like a flower bed, a front window, etc. A member could volunteer for each, providing tender loving care in the assigned area for several months or a year. Suddenly, the trustees are refreshed by the support and recognition, and the building itself seems to come alive.

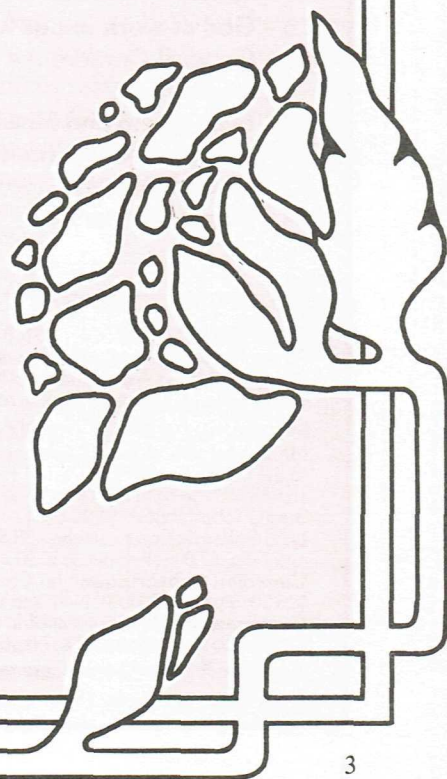
A Sunday school teacher or a youth worker could be loved to life. There must be many ways. Does the teacher of your class have a home with a lawn to mow in summer or a driveway to clear of snow in winter? A good teacher spends hours in study. As one of the class members who doesn't have that time demand, you could provide a generous act of love by arranging to handle some of the routine home chores for the teacher for the year. And if, while you mow the lawn or shovel the snow, you would surround his or her life and home with prayer, your teacher or youth worker will be one more person who has been loved to life.

There is your pastor, too. He gives in so many ways. Bless him with the life-producing effect of your loving

and generosity. Think of what happens to a pastor when at Christmas each family in the church finds a uniquely personal way to pass along a gift and a word of appreciation. He is encouraged and invigorated—loved to life.

Or try this approach. Few things are more affirming to a pastor than the realization that people are taking seriously his proclamation of the good news. Let a majority of the people in a congregation follow this pattern each week: (a) pray daily for the pastor's inspiration in sermon preparation; (b) sometime between Monday morning and the sermon time the next Sunday, send or hand the pastor a little note indicating your prayer and sharing an encouraging word or inspired thought; (c) go to bed reasonably early Saturday night with the intention of being as alert and attentive as possible on Sunday morning; (d) get up in time on Sunday morning to enjoy a leisurely quiet time including, if possible, some exposure to the wonders of nature; and (e) finally, find your spot in the place of worship (preferably more than halfway toward the front—ideally, on the second or third pew!) early enough to engage in earnest prayer for yourself, your fellow worshippers, and the pastor. Let enough members follow this practice and—even if your pastor is “sort of dry”—your loving concern will breathe new life into his spirit and ministry.

Church leaders may want to affirm and even coordinate such love conspiracies. But whether the conspiracy is coordinated by leadership decisions or is the spontaneous activity of a few people who dream about a church that is alive, the results will be the same: *loved to life*.



evangelical VISITOR

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Vol. 101, No. 4

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A

by Ray L. Bailey

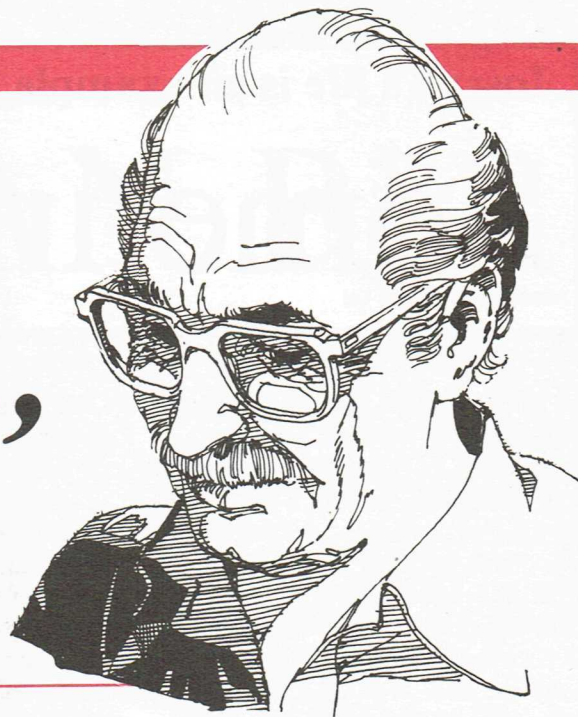
Saying goodbye to someone is often a painful experience, especially if it is to a loved one that you might not see again. But under the pain of parting there should be a joy—one that transcends the barriers of time and death.

My family has just experienced such a parting. My grandfather, Ernest Bailey, had been in failing health for some time. Circumstances of care and money dictated the painful decision by my parents to move him to a care home in Oklahoma. This was not done lightly or without consideration of the many years he had lived near us in California. The fact that we would have to say goodbye and face the possibility of not seeing him alive again weighed on us.

As the day that we would have to say goodbye to him arrived, my ten-year-old daughter and I discussed what we should do. Should we buy him some gift that he could take with him to his new home to remember us by? We discarded, one after another, all of the usual ideas: flowers, cards, clothing, books. They seemed impractical since Grandpa was having to leave many of his belongings behind.

What could we do to be a lasting memory of our last time together? Unable to decide, the time came to see him. Laura and I drove over to

“living goodbye”



see him with empty hands and heavy hearts.

While we sat and visited one last time, I saw Grandpa's Bible laying on the T.V. next to me. Then as the conversation lagged, the Holy Spirit spoke to me.

Ernest's one passion in life has always been to serve the Lord. Never a time went by that, when visiting, he didn't turn the conversation to the Lord and how he had been saved and blessed by the Lord. As a boy this always had irritated me. But as an adult, I knew that my grandfather was constantly praying for me and my family, and it was appreciated.

I opened the Bible and found a marker where he had finished his last reading, chapter 7 of John. With his permission I began to read. There was nothing spectacular in the passages that spoke directly to our situation. It is an account of Jesus dealing with the Pharisees. But underneath came the ministering of the Holy Spirit. As I finished reading, I understood what gift I could give to Grandpa.

I began to tell him about the many times in my life that his witness to the Lord had affected me. As a boy, I had stayed several weeks with my grandparents. Every morning we had devotions and prayed. Grandpa would pray for the family, and then go on to missionaries, the church,

other people. We kids would joke about Grandpa's "praying around the world." But underneath, it got to me. I knew that he cared. Grandpa was determined that, by the power of the Lord through prayer, not one of his grandchildren would fail to meet the Lord.

As tears began to stream down my face, I told him what the Lord meant to me. I told Grandpa what *he* meant to me. His lifetime of praying for us had been rewarded.

Then the realization of what God intends for us in the future dawned on me. I was not saying a permanent "Goodbye" to Grandpa. It's only a "See you later." We will transcend the limits of this body and receive new ones when we die or Christ comes again. We will live in the new heaven and the new earth. If we believe what our Lord has told us will happen, we need never say a permanent goodbye to those we love.

As the three of us talked through the tears, a peace descended on our hearts. It was no longer a sorrowful goodbye—it became a "living goodbye." This was the gift. There is nothing physical that will last beyond death. But Grandpa will always know that Laura, his great-grandchild, and I would see him again. It is not a gift that we can bestow. Christ had given

the gift to us and we, in turn, can offer it to others.

As Laura and I drove home, we talked of the feelings we had. Unless we get to Oklahoma before Grandpa dies, we will not see him on this earth again. But we will see him in heaven. What hope this brings to the tears of parting! What peace this gives in a world that tells us there is nothing beyond the finality of death!

Laura and I even discussed the possibilities that one of us might go to school or work and never return home again. But holding the promises of God before us, death is not a permanent situation.

With confidence, albeit with tears, we could hug Grandpa and say, "See you later, Grandpa." ■

Ray L. Bailey lives in Redlands, Ca., with his wife Mary and daughter Laura. He attends Alia Loma Brethren in Christ Church where he is an adult Sunday school teacher and deacon. Ernest Bailey, 87, now lives in Hydro, Ok., at the Maple Lawn Manor. He was ordained as pastor of the Parallel Brethren in Christ Church (meeting in a school house) in 1932. In 1939 the Leedy, Okla., congregation asked for his leadership, where he served until 1942. Ernest and the family moved to California where he was Assistant pastor at the Chino Brethren in Christ through the mid 1940s.

Ernest has 3 children (1 deceased), 12 grandchildren (1 deceased), and 20 great-grandchildren.

Joseph's life is an example . . .

Sometimes you need

Recently one of the committees in our church met with our architects to address a critical parking issue if our church is to build its much-needed new facility. As we prioritized our options, a plan of attack was developed stating that if our first choice could not be accomplished, we would go with "Plan B."

That phrase got me to thinking that a lot of life is Plan B. I thought of a woman in our church recently widowed, a man who had just been told he had cancer, a family whose six-year-old daughter will never get out of a wheelchair. These and a multitude of people live with something other than their first choice. But they choose to live and not give up.

In the Bible, Joseph is a classic illustration of someone whose life was dramatically changed when, as a seventeen-year-old boy, he was sold into slavery and ended up in a foreign country. His story is a great model for us of someone who not only survived but thrived because he picked up the pieces of life and went on. There are six lessons from his life which are valuable to you when faced with Plan B.

1. Accept "Plan B" as a part of life. Job said, "Man that is born of woman is of few days, and full of trouble" (14:1). Daniel had his lions' den, Elijah his Jezebel, and Paul his thorn in the flesh. Even though we have a perfect God, we live in an imperfect world. Innocent people's lives have been forever altered for no

other reason than that they or their loved ones were in the wrong place at the wrong time.

To believe that nothing really bad will happen to you since you are a Christian or that you will understand everything that could possibly come your way is bad theology. This sets you up for unspeakable pain when the storms of life hit. People who hope to avoid all failure or misfortune are trying to live in a dream world that does not exist.

The wise individual recognizes that disappointment is sometimes a part of life. Therefore he develops a mindset to meet difficulty and make the most of it. Joseph appears to have accepted his new role as a slave rather than wallowing in self-pity, being consumed with why something so awful had messed up his life. When you are faced with a Plan B, it does not necessarily mean that you have been bad. It probably just means that you are a part of the human race.

2. Visualize "Plan B" as a great alternative to defeat. Some people see only one way of doing things. When those dreams are shattered, they give up. When you choose to be anchored to a painful past, it is difficult to move on. Attitudes cripple far more people than accidents. Epictetus put things in the right perspective when he said, "Men are not disturbed by the things that happen, but by their opinion of the things that happen." The truth is there are few events from which we cannot recover.

If you refuse to give up, eventually a Plan B will come into focus. It may not be your first choice but in comparison to defeat it can look pretty good. As someone has said, "Pain is

inevitable but misery is optional." Joseph could have sulked in prison and said, "Life will never be the same for me down here in Egypt." Instead he refused to give up his convictions and awaited new developments. When a person keeps faith in himself and his God, there is no such thing as permanent defeat.

In the 1952 Olympic games a Hungarian champion won the gold medal for a shooting event. Six months later he tragically lost his right arm, his shooting hand, in an accident. Yet three and a half years later in Melbourne he won his second gold medal using Plan B—his left hand. Plan B does not have to mean the end but can signal a glorious second chance.

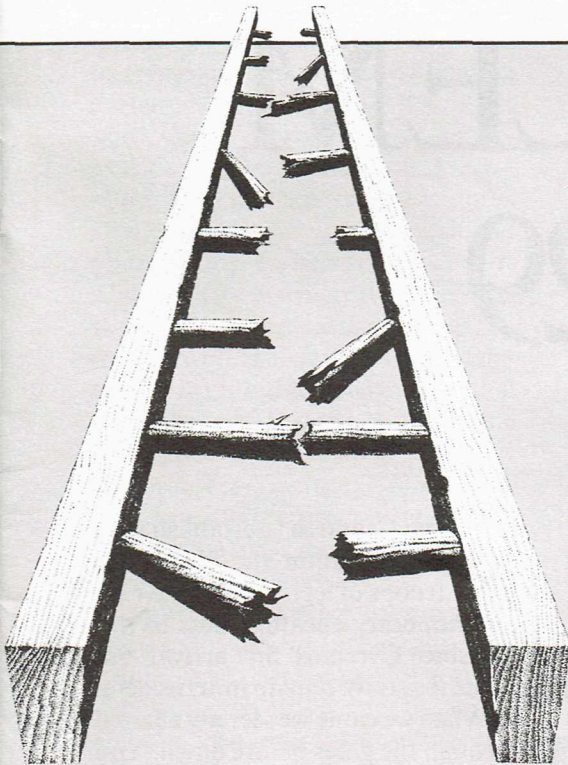
3. Choose "Plan B" as your focus instead of the obstacles. Too many people dwell on their problems rather than solutions. Some people are great at verbalizing, analyzing, and blaming others for their problems, yet sometimes they never consider rising above them. Alexander Graham Bell, no doubt speaking from his experience as an inventor said, "When one door closed another opens. But we often look so long regretfully at the closed door that we do not see the one that has opened for us."

Joseph could have concentrated on the dilemma of his imprisonment and slavery. Instead he selected to use his energies in positive ways with forgiveness for his brothers and faith in the future. Sir Walter Scott limped through life on club feet. Napoleon was epileptic. John Milton was blind and Beethoven was deaf. But these people chose to be victors instead of victims. Plan B moves us away from self-pity to possibilities. It gets us to

Roger Boatman ministers with Community Christian Church, San Juan Capistrano, California. Reprinted by permission of Christian Standard.

to use "PLAN B"

by Roger Boatman



thinking about what can be, rather than what has been taken away.

4. Consider "Plan B" as an opportunity you might not have had. If Joseph had not been sold into slavery, he could have stayed in his homeland and been a great rancher, but it is doubtful he would have ever been raised to a position of influence such as in Egypt. When Joseph revealed his identity to his brothers who had come seeking food during the famine, he told them, "God did send me before you to preserve life" (Genesis 45:5). Joseph had seen that his trip leading to slavery and imprisonment had also brought him the incredible opportunity to use the fertile lands of Egypt for the saving of lives.

When Paul and Silas were imprisoned they used the occasion to sing songs in the night. They turned the jail into a revival meeting, eventually converting the jailer and his family.

It is possible Paul would never have met and converted the Philippian jailer were it not for that imprisonment. Paul, ever the great improviser, at another time of imprisonment picked up the quill and wrote letters which have reached around the world and across the ages.

As we consider the options of life, we have a tendency to select those things which produce immediate results. Sometimes God closes those doors, leading us instead to more fruitful and lasting endeavors. Sometimes we pursue those tasks only after the first options were taken away.

5. Use "Plan B" as an occasion to develop special character traits. Plan B forces us to discover talents and use abilities which perhaps would never have been perfected under ideal circumstances. As a young girl on the prairie in Colorado, my mother cared for her dying father in the home, since hospitals were virtually nonexistent in that area. I believe this painful experience helped uncover her gifts of mercy and compassion which would later manifest themselves in a nursing career.

There are dormant qualities in us all that can emerge from trial much like gold which is refined by fire. Some people observe these acquired attributes and are unwittingly drawn to individuals who have experiential knowledge of the human condition. You can sometimes tell by listening to sermons, those ministers who have a depth of compassion which cannot be learned from books. After the dust has cleared, many individuals emerge from Plan B better people than if they had gone with their "ideal" Plan A. They are more caring, more loving, and more useful.

In times of trial if we are malleable instead of resistant, the Master Potter can bring a special quality out of those lives which appeared forever marred.

6. See "Plan B" as an expression of God's faithfulness. When tragedy wipes out our plans, even Christian people can become confused and bewildered. Life seems cruel and unfair, making no sense with its twists and turns. Omar Khayyam's words appear true, "The world rolls round forever like a mill. It grinds out death and life and good and ill. It has no purpose, mind or will."

Joseph, however, did not see his painful experience as wasted time or senseless. He told his brothers in retrospect, "You thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good." To look back upon the years after Plan B has been completed and see God bringing triumph out of tragedy is one of the most faith-building experiences in life. The deeply moving scene of Joseph and his father being reunited, seems a fulfillment of the Scripture, "He will give them beauty for ashes."

In times of tragedy, the most important question is not who caused it or why, but how will we respond. Viktor Frankl, in the Nazi concentration camps of Europe, saw people deprived of houses, money, and clothing, yet spoke of "the last human freedom," the freedom to choose one's attitude. Joseph is a great example of a man who survived some horrible experiences which could have scarred him for life. Instead of being disillusioned and depressed when we face an upsetting turn of events, may we like Joseph gratefully make the most of life with Plan B. ■

WORD FROM JERUSALEM, A.D. 29

by Don Ringler

Hail, Flavius! From your devoted servant and liege, Artimus, centurion of Caesar.

A cool wind blows this evening as I write you from Syria. The encampment is quiet after a tumultuous week that may have doomed our presence in this accursed province. I am aghast at all that has happened. No one wanted such a confrontation, but unseen forces seemed to direct the events.

This letter's courier will no doubt tell the senators of the unrest here. The deteriorating political situation in Rome causes me to write you straightforwardly.

Although I have tried to divorce myself from our politics, I was dismayed to hear that Tiberius Caesar refused to return to Rome for the senate opening. How long does he expect to live in seclusion on Capri?

I also weary of the senate's arguing over the tremendous costs of garrisoning the 9th Legion in the East. For this land to remain Roman, Rome must show its strength. This news from Rome also weighs heavily on Pontius Pilate, that simple-minded Judean procurator.

Don Ringler is a freelance writer in Benton Harbor, Mich. He based this article on the historical writings of Josephus, Irenaeus, Papias, and Scripture.

The gods have led me into a strange land. I have been thrust between two agitated factions, each bent on the other's destruction. Pilate, who orders our legion in the name of our Caesar, is weak and indecisive because he fears an upheaval in Rome. He expresses his loyalty to Tiberius at every opportunity, but he also keeps open ties with Sejonus, should the traitor succeed in his deadly machinations within the palace.

Pilate has confided in me that his greatest fear is that word of a general disorder will reach Rome, and the senate will withdraw imperial legion influence.

Pilate supports the Jewish religious leaders. Herod, a local Jewish king of the Galilean region, has greatly influenced him. Open sedition rests on the lips of everyone in this rotten city, and Herod believes only religious leaders can stop the revolt.

These Jews plot rebellion not only against Rome and Caesar, may the gods protect him, but also against their own rulers. Orderly collection of the taxes is no longer possible.

I wish I had never come to Jerusalem, this filthy heathen center of barbarian religious worship. Five months ago, Pilate ordered our ranks

here from Caesarea to establish winter quarters within the city walls. Other troops of legionnaires have set up temporary encampments in this city since Cyrenius' first arrival, but Pilate insists we remain in Jerusalem.

When we came we secretly entered through the gates before dawn. You cannot imagine the turmoil our presence occasioned that first morning. They didn't abuse us because we were foreigners; their tempers were aroused because our ensigns and staffs displayed an image of our beloved Caesar.

These barbarians have a quaint religious law that forbids the making or display of any image of a person. They were so greatly concerned that thousands of city dwellers journeyed to Caesarea to plead their cause before Pilate. The procurator resisted. He feared that removing our ensigns would insult Tiberius himself. But the crowds grew larger and more clamorous.

By the sixth day, the people's priests stirred up so much strife that Pilate ordered me to return to the palace with 50 soldiers. Upon our arrival, I had the troops hide behind the banners of the Judgment Seat.

On Pilate's signal we surrounded the throng and threatened immediate death if the people did not dis-

perse. To my surprise and Pilate's astonishment, the mob of men—old and young alike—lay on the ground, their necks bared, crying that they would rather die than see their laws transgressed.

Pilate, who seemed easily swayed by these provincials, was moved by their firm resolution to hold their laws inviolable. He ordered us back to Jerusalem to remove all offending ensigns.

Bloodshed was not so easily averted, however, when Pilate arrived in Jerusalem several months later. Crowds shouted reproach and abuse against his person and Caesar. The mood grew so ugly that I ordered soldiers, cloaked in dark robes, to mingle with the rioters. On my signal, we drew hidden daggers and fell upon the mob leaders. But this time the soldiers acted viciously and slew vast numbers, including many who were loyal to the procurator.

Since that dark day we have feared for our safety in this city. How I long to return to the wide avenues and impressive architecture of imperial Rome. Jerusalem teems with bearded men who smell little better than their animals. Walking through this city we jostle in narrow, winding alleys faced by doorways that lead to even darker passageways. The only exception to the squalor is the ornate temple that symbolizes their barbarian religion.

For several weeks I have seen that the Jewish priests are losing control of the people. Only Pilate seems to be blind. Daily word comes to Jerusalem of strange happenings in the desert towns that surround this hilly

region. Imaginations run unchecked as travelers arrive with tales of lame men walking, lepers being cured, and even the dead coming to life. New teachings, strange even to these odd people, undermine the very laws that have united these people for centuries.

These strange rumors center around the travelings of a greatly followed Jewish prophet. His stories make our gods appear as scarcely more than Greek slaves. This man, Jesus of Nazareth, constantly irritated the Jewish leaders because he was so popular. Everyone knew that the local leaders were plotting his death. Why he would come to Jerusalem, I cannot guess.

But he did. And in such a manner! Hundreds of thousands of these Jews lined the road to the city gate shouting to their new king. I ordered the legion to ready their weapons, but not assemble unless the mob became violent. Luckily, the screaming crowd dispersed, but the incident set an ominous tone for the rest of the week.

The city overflowed with more people than I have ever seen. They were to participate in a religious feast. The bedding of sleeping worshipers littered the streets. Many traveled more than a week to sacrifice their family lamb at the temple.

When Pilate heard that King Herod was to be in Jerusalem for the feast, he came from Caesarea hoping to meet with the monarch and patch up past differences. I arranged to execute three thieves to please the procurator and his entourage. I had hoped that the public execution

would quell the crowd's rebellious spirits.

I feared that the agitators would incite the people. Even the rulers were tense. Guards, armed by the temple priests, stood in every gate. At last year's festival, strangers from the Samaritan region slipped into the temple under the cover of darkness and threw about dead bodies. The results were catastrophic since the Jewish law forbidding dead bodies within the confines of the temple is more strictly enforced than that forbidding the display of images.

The feast's religious rites started three days earlier, and more than one million people crammed into this walled city. The temple commotion drove me to the square outside the gate. The scene was incredible, dear Flavius. Tens of thousands of men waited to enter with bleating sheep in their arms. The cloud of black smoke over the temple reeked with the stench of blood. The priests' white linen robes were stained beyond recognition.

Although the smells and sights were indescribable, nothing struck terror in my heart more than the sounds—not just the pathetic bleat of sheep who seemed to know their fate, but from within the temple walls, as if with one voice, the throng shouted praises to their god.

Flavius, I trembled when I left the temple area. I knew that Pilate must be able to smell the blood and hear the people.

I went to bed early that evening; my stomach still retched from the sights and sounds and the fear that permeated my soul. During the third watch my slave woke me to tell me that the procurator had summoned me. I was surprised to see the Governor's Hall lit up at such an early hour. The Jewish elders had seized Jesus and awakened the Roman procurator, asking that Jesus be put to death for violating their peculiar religious canon.

Pilate wanted no part of the squabble, but he knew King Herod's will. He looked pale and defeated as he slipped from the hall.

I made my way to the procurator. I knew that Pilate felt his hands were

*I had hoped that the
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tied, but I could feel the crowd's anger growing as the people assembled around the hall. I told Pilate I didn't know whether the legion could control the mobs that were sure to assemble to see Jesus crucified. Pilate shrugged his shoulders as he continued to stare at the stone blocks beneath his feet.

My mind raced as I tried to solve the dilemma. Our beloved Caesar, on a high holiday to Saturn or Jupiter or Mars, pardons and frees a prisoner as an act of imperial contrition to the gods. Why then could not Caesar's representative in Syria use this occasion to condemn and pardon this self-proclaimed son of the Hebrew god?

But the priests had taken advantage of Pilate's absence. Thousands cried louder to crucify this Jesus and release a notorious thief.

When I realized that Pilate was not going to be able, politically, to save this Jesus, I rushed back to our legion's encampment to assemble additional troops. When we returned to the Governor's Hall, the procurator's personal guards had stripped Jesus. I ordered his clothing returned, but there was little I could do for his bleeding scalp.

We seized the three condemned men and led them to the Place of Death outside the city's walls.

Though crucifixion is not as common in the provinces as our critics in the senate charge, it is still an awesome sight. Why would so many people, including women and children, want to watch such a spectacle? But then this Jesus was spoken of only in terms of magic and sorcery. The city was full of tales of his accomplishing the impossible. I am

sure that most viewers were compelled by curiosity. They wanted to see Jesus perform another miracle and save himself.

But when no miracle came, the crowds faded away. By noon only a handful of the prophet's closest associates remained. Even the legionnaires began to lose interest, viewing the execution as only another holiday from the mundane.

But, dear Flavius, this Jesus was unlike any other man I have ever seen. He bore himself as true royalty, but lacked the arrogance that marks this breed. He stood silently before his accusers as if he knew, and his eyes looked as if he *did* know. Death was inevitable. Even as he hung on the timbers, he did not struggle or plead, nor did he rail against us, his executioners.

It surprised me that he could call upon his god at the moment of death.

Perhaps his god felt his anguish. As Jesus hung limp, the sky grew black. Nothing like it has ever been seen in Rome. The ground shook so hard I could not stand. And a cold wind whistled through the trees. It reminded me of the stories of the ancients, when the gods roamed on our earth.

The cold wind has remained these last two days. A quiet death grip has settled over this city. The priests speak only in hushed tones to each other and do not allow the people to enter the temple.

Pilate wishes the matter were over and forgotten. At his request I have posted legionnaires outside the tomb where the body of this prophet Jesus was placed. Pilate fears that the prophet's friends will steal his body and further inflame the people with stories that he is yet alive.

I do not know, Flavius, what the next few days will bring. I pray to the gods that the festival days will end without another event of such importance that word of it may reach Rome. But I fear this will not be so.

Peace to your family. Please do not forget our serving our Caesar in Syria.

Hail to the senate! Hail to our beloved Caesar! ■

General Conference Youth Program

July 2-7, 1988
in Southern California

Registration: \$25 (U.S.)

Features include:
Sightseeing (Hollywood)
Beach trip
Volleyball tournament
Fireworks
Quizzing

Program coordinators: Karl Hostetler and Brian Lofthouse

More information will appear
in next month's *Visitor*.

single



but not alone

by Rhonda Palmer

The single adults of the Mechanicsburg Brethren in Christ Church sponsored a Single's Seminar on Saturday, January 16, 1988, at the Mechanicsburg Brethren in Christ Church. The seminar was open to singles in the Allegheny Conference.

The theme for the seminar was "Single, But Not Alone," drawing on Philipians 4:6-9 as the text for the day. The speaker was Dr. Roy Smith, founder and clinical director of Pennsylvania Psychological Services, which currently has three offices in Harrisburg, Lebanon, and Lancaster. He received his doctorate in psychology in 1982 from the California Graduate Institute and has done extensive work and further study in the area of psychology. Dr. Smith related personal situations that happened in his own life experiences to which most of us could relate.

Dr. Smith discussed "Your Inner World" of false self (pretending to be what you aren't) and true self (how we really act, to say what we feel without being false, and to be accepted just as we are). We discussed how these true and false selves are important in our own

lives. Other people influence us to portray this false self without being able to really express our own true feelings.

Dr. Smith emphasized the importance of spending time alone and to think positively about life using his "rock story." He told how as a young boy he often went to the Dauphin Dam to fish and sort out his thoughts. While sitting on a huge rock, he would think how huge both the rock and the dam seemed to be, and how small he was. In life, problems seem huge like the water and the rock. After he was older and had been gone from the area for some time, he decided to return to the place which held so many special memories. It was a place to escape and relax. While there, he realized that the rock was not really that big and the dam really was not that huge.

Sometimes life's problems seem so large and overwhelming, and we feel so small and alone. When facing problems and troubles in life, we work through them by handling one thing at a time. We become stronger and able to handle things on our own, realizing that they were not so large after all.

The following ideas were given by Dr. Smith on how we could build self-esteem: Start to accept your own thoughts and feelings without feeling they are stupid or have no value. Take

chances—otherwise there's no chance of failure or success. Take control of your own life and feel good about being in charge. Compliment yourself for the little things you may have accomplished. Be able to accept compliments without putting yourself down. Love and like yourself. Don't judge yourself too hard—we are the first to judge ourselves and we seem to be harsher judges than others. Accept change and work through it, even when it seems difficult. Set goals realistically within reach and don't consider that a failure.

The seminar emphasized that getting married does not solve the conflict we have within ourselves. When married, things may not get easier or better. It might make matters worse. If we understand and have peace with ourselves and God, we are stronger individuals. If we should ever marry, it would be a healthier relationship.

We single adults learned we are not alone in the feelings of our inner world. The seminar was very beneficial to each individual attending. We decided to hold more single adult seminars and hope to see more single adults attend.

Our concluding thought was, "If we treated ourselves as we treat our own best friend, what a different world it would be."

Rhonda Palmer attends the Mechanicsburg (Pa.) Brethren in Christ Church.

April 1988

Initial Impressions: Bangkok, Thailand

by John and Kathy Brubaker

It's been said that our initial impressions are never quite accurate—yet we all have them and would certainly have difficulty drawing final conclusions without them. In this article we'd like to share some of our perceptions about life as we've experienced it in the bustling metropolis of Bangkok, the capital city of Thailand. We hope to give you more than just facts and incidents from our experience, but to relay to you the subtle flavoring that distinguishes Thai people and culture from other peoples and cultures of the world.

Because we desire to relate in a culturally appropriate manner to people whose culture is quite different from our own, we have a goal of exploring those aspects of Thai life that cannot be learned in a classroom or from a book. Through our interactions with Thai people from different walks of life, we hope to learn how to best accomplish our goal of sharing a God of hope in terms that are clearly understandable within a Thai culture. Four months certainly don't qualify us as experts on Thai people, language, or culture; yet as we discuss various aspects of life in Bangkok, perhaps you can help us identify any significant implications that would help us realize our goal.

Arrival in Bangkok

On August 12, 1987, just a few minutes after midnight, the stark reality of our new surroundings be-

came all too genuine. Upon our arrival at Don Muang International Airport in Bangkok, we were met by a horde of taxi drivers shouting something like, "Hey you, you go where, you wan taxi?" We soon realized that we were feeling like "fish out of water" and that this was just the beginning of some "exciting" adjustments to our new home. The less pleasant aspects of life in Bangkok were quite evident. The taxis with no meters, huge fried grasshoppers for sale, bugs, mosquitoes, lizards, snakes, toilets with no place to sit, incredibly crowded buses, interminable traffic jams, unrelenting noise, stifling pollution, and heat, heat, heat. Even chicken feet in the chicken soup.

And yet, except for the chicken feet and the fried grasshoppers, most Thais dislike these same aspects of life in Bangkok as much as visitors do. These not so exciting elements really don't touch the heart of Thai culture or Thai people. We found that as we got to know Thai people better, we began to see the more beautiful aspects of life in Thailand. For that reason, we'll use two incidents from our Christian holiday as windows into Thai culture as we've seen it.

Christmas dinner

Since we had the opportunity to get to know the workers in an adjacent office over the course of the last four months, we thought it might be appropriate to invite them all over for a small party just before Christmas. In true *farang*, "time-conscious," fashion (*farang* is the Thai word for Westerners), we planned to begin

eating Saturday at exactly 12:00 noon when the work ended. However, we failed to take into account Thai customs related to time and celebrations.

Champoo, the secretary next door, arrived on a *tuk-tuk* (a motorized three-wheeled taxi) a few minutes after noon with an armload of vegetables, meat, and, of course, hot peppers (no Thai meal is complete without enough peppers to bleach your stomach). Ahh, apparently ice cream and cake is just not enough for a Thai party. Unless there is plenty of food left over, it just couldn't be *sanuk* (loosely translated as "fun" but an important ingredient in every activity worth doing).

And so we (all six of us present at the time) crammed ourselves into our tiny kitchen to add our own unique expertise to the meal. Unfortunately, there were also plumbers at work in our kitchen at the same time, trying to fix a plugged pipe (they were actually chiseling through a brick wall—not the quietest of activities). But, no matter; that was the perfect time to exercise an important aspect of Thai culture; *mai pen rai*.

Mai pen rai is similar to our expression "it doesn't matter" or "it's O.K." But it's used much more frequently in Thai culture and, when used, shows that the people involved are, literally, "cool-hearted." To be the opposite (ie. hot-hearted, worried about time, overly concerned with surroundings) is a serious cultural offense. Thai people seem to place much more importance on interpersonal relationships and less importance on time and surroundings than do Westerners. And so we

The authors began a tent-making ministry in Bangkok, Thailand, in August 1987. With Shirley Johnson, they are the first representatives of Brethren in Christ World Missions to serve in that country. Pray for them.



A leisurely dinner for six on Christmas Eve included four spicy dishes for the Thai guests and two tasteless dishes for the Brubakers.

(all "cool-hearted" people, to be sure) worked diligently preparing the meal for the next two and one-half hours, oblivious to the noise and dirt from the plumbers, lack of running water, cramped quarters, hunger pangs, and the heat (always heat). *Mai pen rai*. It really was a fun time together.

And what a meal we prepared, a pot-full of crabs, four fairly spicy dishes and two dishes *rot juud* (loosely, "tasteless") for the *farangs* whose innocent stomachs just couldn't handle the full force of Thai peppers. After we had eaten more than we could possibly stuff into our stomachs while seated on the floor, we changed position, sat down on seats and started on dessert. By 6:00 we had finally finished eating, cleaned up the rest of the food that we couldn't eat (plenty of left-overs) and said goodbye to the last guest. We had another Christmas dinner scheduled for 6:30 that evening. Oh well, *mai pen rai*.

Our new friend Noy

Toward the end of our exciting afternoon, we had a guest arrive who would be living with us for the next two weeks. Noy, a twenty-one-year-old student at the nearby Bangkok Bible College, couldn't make it home

for Christmas break, so we had invited her to stay with us. There was one slight problem, however: Noy speaks very little English and, while we can speak some Thai, we were not sure we could carry on a meaningful conversation for more than 10 or 15 minutes. But, *mai pen rai*, we'd manage somehow. Besides, we thought it would be exciting to learn more about the way Thai Christians celebrate Christmas.

'Twas the night before Christmas . . . about 3:00 a.m. to be exact, when we received a knock on our door. After we managed to rouse ourselves and open the door, we had the privilege of learning more about Thai Christmas customs. Noy had left earlier that evening to go caroling with her church. What we didn't realize was that caroling usually lasts all night. When we overcame our initial shock of greeting Noy and about 15 other people that late at night, we were able to smile and greet them appropriately. It was another good learning experience.

We should mention just a few words about smiling. The reason that Thailand is sometimes called the Land of Smiles is quite obvious to most visitors: Thais smile much of the time. Now a smile in Thailand

does not always mean the same as in Western countries. It actually is much more important. A smile may be employed to show amusement, to excuse oneself, to thank someone, to show embarrassment, or just to side-step difficult questions. However, the least a person can do in a difficult situation is smile. We'll leave it up to you to guess what our smile meant that night.

One of the things that impresses us about Noy is her radiant smile. Noy's smile is not a mask to be worn, but rather a reflection of the joy deep in her heart. Accompanying that expression of joy is a strong desire to share the source with others. As a Christian, Noy is certainly in the minority in her country, since less than one percent of Thai people would consider themselves Christians. Yet we were so impressed with her loving spirit as she shared the true meaning of Christmas with those whom we met during the two weeks together. In fact, she actually shared with just about everyone who entered our home and stayed for more than a few minutes.

Christmas evening we had invited two teen-age girls to our home, Pawn and Nee, who work for the owner of our apartments. When they arrived we talked for a bit and then Noy shared the Christmas story, using a small manger scene and a few candles we had lit for the evening. She concluded by explaining from the Bible that *Pra' Yesu* (Jesus) came to this world as a baby and in doing so brought light into a dark world. We too can receive light and in turn share that light with others by first seeking the source. Although Pawn and Nee had never heard about Jesus before, they prayed to receive him Christmas night. We couldn't really follow all that was said between Noy and the two girls, but knew that both Pawn and Nee had been introduced to a special friend. ■

The church planter: MaTshuma

by Doris Dube

She is a smallish, quiet grandmother who speaks with a very soft voice. She is not boastful or full of herself. You'd never spot her in a crowd because she is so ordinary. She works so silently that one would hardly notice her. Yes, this is Maria Tshuma, or better, MaTshuma, as she is known. MaTshuma is one of the best known evangelists of the Brethren in Christ Church in Zimbabwe. The amount of work she has performed in the church cannot be disputed. In the early '60s she was called to be an evangelist and she accepted. At that time no one knew just how seriously her call would affect the destiny of the church. Today when we refer to MaTshuma, we are actually talking of a church planter.

In 1983 MaTshuma started her evangelistic work in the Binga area. This area to the north is so remote that few people would willingly go and work there. Many people there are still shrouded in darkness. When the educationists brought light to Zimbabwe they touched only here and there in Binga. The greater area was left as it was. Disease and sickness are still rampant and the people are still under the bondage of such beliefs as they are against the teachings of the Bible.

Into such darkness MaTshuma ventured with nothing but her Bible as a shield and defense—a "forlorn old lady" venturing into the unknown all by herself. She knew no one there. She had no specific place which was going to serve as her base. She just went because the word says, "Go ye" The strain, the drain on her physique, the good times, and the encouraging events she experienced would make a big volume if we could put them onto paper. It is enough to say that all the work she has done would only be possible to one who walks close to the Creator.

In 1984, during the General Conference at Matopo Mission, MaTshuma spoke to the church at large. She spoke at length about the greatness of the work at Binga, the vastness of the fields and the need for church workers. The plea for help was directed to every church member. People were invited to support this work by money, prayer, or gifts in kind. A year later we still saw MaTshuma pleading for an assistant. When the response came that the church could not afford to support another full-time worker, MaTshuma offered half her salary to be given to another worker so they could work side by side. Finally in March 1986, a young man, Cornelius Dube, was sent as her assistant. Still the workload is heavy. In this area MaTshuma has planted the seed of the church in several places, including Dett, Cross-Dett, Kamativi, Tinde, Mpambe, Pashu, Ntatatongwe and Chinego. On September 20th, 1987, we saw the dedication of the church at Chinego. What a blessing!

Chinego was not the first place MaTshuma worked when she started her work in the area, but it is the first where a church building has been put up. By the looks of things it will not be the last. When MaTshuma had done a fair amount of village visiting at Chinego and it was obvious that the local people who had formed a body desired a church building, she started the negotiations. She saw the Village Development Committee, who sent her to the Councilor for that area. The Councilor sent her to Chief Pashu, who in turn sent her to the District Administrator. The D. A. instructed his Executive Council to give the believers a site. With these good tidings, the collection of funds for building began. The people in Chinego are very poor, so most of the money came from donations, especially from America. It is

on record that a certain couple donated \$600 (American) which was part of their wedding gift money.

The congregation at Chinego is basically made up of women, young people, and children. It was the women who carried water and actually molded the bricks for the walls. Even MaTshuma was among them. When asked how she managed that, she said that when there was need for her to labor physically she had the strength to do so. But now she feels the weakness her age entails. When the bricks had been made, the building was put up. As is customary when congregations build churches, they put up the walls, doors, and window frames. Then the Zimbabwe Church body through the Executive Board donates the roof and pulpit. In this case it also donated ten benches. When the roofing materials had been purchased, Rev. J. R. Shenk was asked to put on the roof. He did this with the help of a few young men from Lobengula Church. The pulpit was taken out to Chinego on the day of the dedication.

Rev. J. Dlodlo preached the dedication sermon and Bishop Ndlovu led the ceremony. As the keys were handed over to the pastor, Mrs. Khesiwe Ndlovu, she and the congregation of Chinego were exhorted to open the building for use by the church and community.

Among the projects MaTshuma started is a women's sewing club which had been meeting at one of the



Maria Tshuma enjoys a moment with Zimbabwean bishop Stephen Ndlovu.

homes. Now the women can use the church for their sewing and other meetings. The weary can use it as a sanctuary for prayer and meditation. Homes can be set up as people get married in it. It is to be used as a place for praise and worship.

The offering at the end of the service was \$71.36. For every dollar that was given, another one will be given from the special dollar-to-dollar scheme. This money is to be used to buy more benches.

The church at Chingogo has great promise. The pastor foresees tremendous growth because the youth are coming forward to learn in great numbers. She hopes that among these will rise leaders to take up the leadership of the church. Then she will not need to pastor. We all need to pray for her because sometimes her role as a wife hinders her progress as a church leader. The young people's eagerness to learn and share was apparent. On Sundays the young people rush to church, ring the bell and start the lesson for the day as soon as people start trickling in. We witnessed their eagerness during our short visit. The young people and children sang much of the time. They sang, ululated [gave a high, trilling accompaniment to the music], and fairly danced the service away. When Rev. Raphael Mtombeni, who led the service, advised them to express their praise with "amens," they forgot and kept on clapping. It was good and refreshing to witness such childlike freedom in worship.

Mpambe is listed as another of the places where MaTshuma has planted the seed of faith. She has much work ahead of her in this area. She says when she first got there she went to the headmaster of the local school and sought a home with the family. But after she conducted evening devotions in the home, they would not let her sleep under their roof and sent her to sleep in the classrooms some distance away. That night and several others after that she was disturbed by shrieking demons who were threatening her life because she was disturbing their "peace." She is still in this area. She deserves our faithful prayers. ■

April 1988

God at work in our world

Evangelism in South Africa

From a letter from Hamilton Madlabane—South Africa

Together Hamilton Madlabane and Shadrack Maloka held a two-and-a-half week tent meeting in South Africa. God did wonderful things! There were 32 adult first-time conversions and 25 young people. To care for the converts, they have organized cottage meetings during the week and a Sunday gathering. Neighbors are invited to attend these meetings and more people are coming to the Lord. Mr. Madlabane is teaching the new Christians to become soul winners.

This group is planning to affiliate with the Brethren in Christ Church.

A letter!

Esther Edmonds—Malawi

John and Esther Edmonds and daughter Nikki had recently arrived at their new home in Malawi when they received a letter from a prayer supporter. Esther writes, "It was nice to hear from you. Your letter came as an answer to prayer. Nikki and I had just prayed that we'd receive one card or Christmas letter because it was the day before Christmas and none had come yet. That same day yours arrived. Thank you!"

"Yes, we have a home. It is in the village of Ntamila, a village of about 400 people with no Christians. There is a mosque just a few hundred yards from us. In fact, we can hear the imam when he calls to prayer." Pray that soon the people will be answering the call of God's Holy Spirit.

Joanna's testimony

As told to and written by her father; translated by Thata Book—Venezuela

My name is Joanna Minerva Alvarez Morales. I was born in Chile on the 18th of October 1977. I am 10 years old. I live in Corinsa, Cagua, in the state of Aragua, Venezuela. I attend the Brethren in Christ Church in Cagua, in the charge of Pastor Alvin Book. I am the second of four children. My parents, and brother and sisters attend the same church. We are all Christians.

The 3rd of November 1987, I was in school. My teacher called me to ask at

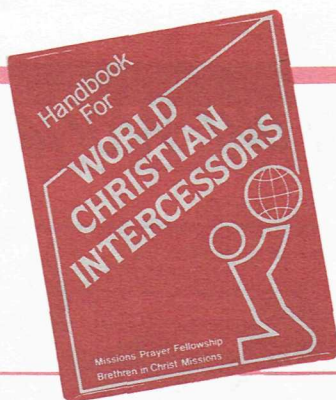


Joanna Morales celebrates her tenth birthday with her pastor Alvin and Thata Book.

what hour the school transport came to take me home. I told her that it came at 6:00 p.m. Then she asked that I go to the school administration office. I did not know really what happened. The only thing I knew was that I had to go to the administration office. I went without understanding. Upon arriving there, I met the director, the sub-director, and my teacher. I asked why they had called me and what had happened. To my surprise, after we entered the office, my teacher asked me if I was an evangelical. I answered, "Yes." Then she asked me to pray for the three of them. I did so. When I finished the prayer, my teacher asked me to pray for her. She was feeling ill. This was done immediately. When I finished, the teacher confessed to me that she felt something strange go over her body when I asked our good God for her health.

Afterward we talked. Then the director asked me if I would be able to help him receive Christ as personal Savior. Because of my inexperience, I answered that he needed to attend a church for receiving the Lord. They continued marveling about the form of prayer that the Christians have. In this moment the presence of God was especially with us, touching their hearts. We all felt the presence of the Savior. Christ be glorified! We must remember that they are unconverted, but in this moment their hearts were touched strongly by our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Thank you, God, for permitting me to speak your Word in my school. I ask you, my Lord, that you give me, by your Holy Spirit, wisdom and understanding necessary to talk each day of your Holy Word." ■



Needed: More World Christian Intercessors

by Miriam Stern

Continuing the Mufulira story (December 1987 *Visitor*, p. 18), we had worked happily with Goliath Phiri for several months in the new Mufulira church planting venture when a bombshell fell: *Goliath has a promotion and is being transferred to Kabwe* (a mining town two and a half hours away). We were coming to learn that job transfers included your most depended-upon people and they could happen suddenly.

Burning in our minds was the fact that in three years this church was to be established and under responsible leadership, and two-thirds of that time had already passed. We had to have a pastor and fast!

An SOS was sent to World Christian Intercessors (WCI) to pray for a pastor for this congregation. We knew one of the two Brethren in

Christ students at the Theological College of Central Africa would be graduating in six months. Thus the church board wrote Dennis Mweetwa a letter of invitation to become the shepherd of this flock.

Dennis received offers from other sectors (attractive ones, too) and we held our breath in anticipation. After much thought and prayer he did accept, and joined our group six months before we said goodbye to Africa. Thanks for praying, but *please* do not stop now.

You see, it hasn't been easy for this new congregation, with most of its people under 35 years of age, and a young pastor just out of theological college and recently married, having to cope with so many problems beyond his years and experience. Prayer support is more urgently needed when a missionary leaves a

post than when he is there, but sad to say, it is usually the opposite.

National leaders need encouragement to send meaningful prayer requests to you, and you here at home need compassion and discipline to enable you to intercede earnestly for people you've never met. Not so easy, especially when you remember that Satan doesn't want you to pray anyway.

Are you a World Christian Intercessor?

As we moved throughout the churches during deputation and tried to encourage more prayer involvement in WCI, some interesting facts surfaced:

(1) Women, more than men, seem involved. The Lord gave his direct teaching on prayer to his disciples. The Twelve were men. (Congratulations to churches who have men on the Missions Committee.)

(2) Some would-be World Christian Intercessors hold back from signing the little pink paper for fear they will not be able to pray *every* day for the requests. Note the application says "I plan to pray daily . . ." sometimes our plans and schedules are disrupted and we may forget. That was not our plan. God understands the intent of our hearts.

I personally am learning much more about other mission fields through WCI. I find that after using the request list for several days, I begin to carry those concerns on my heart. If I wake at night (from too much coffee), I work through the ones I can remember giving extra intercession time. A good time to pray is while doing manual work which doesn't involve thinking.

Develop creativity in praying. My husband and I walk quite a bit. We sometimes pray alternately (aloud) for WCI requests and many others that come to mind. Another way is for one to name a request and both pray silently. Long trips in the car seem much shorter when we pray "at length" (yet keeping an eye on the road).

Now I'm thrilled to read that the Japanese people are becoming more receptive to the gospel . . . a result

16 Anabaptist workshops planned for Congress 88

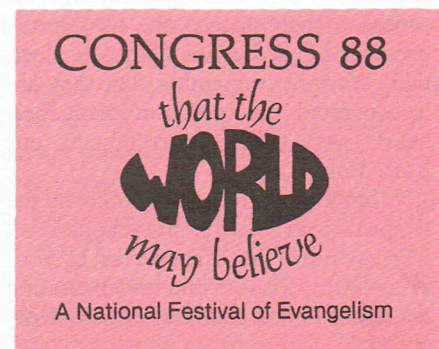
Sixteen Anabaptist-related workshops are being planned during Congress 88, a national festival on evangelism Aug. 4-7 in Des Plaines, Ill., a suburb of Chicago.

The workshops include "The Role of Evangelism in Church Planting" by Warren Hoffman; "Peace Planting" by gelism" by Richard Blackburn; "The Urban Church and Futurism" by Myron

Augsburger; "Friendship Evangelism" by Donald Yoder; "Ishmael and Isaac, Sons of Abraham" by David W. Shenk and James Leaman; "Developing Leaders for the Black Church" by Lindsey Robinson and Freeman Miller; and "Discipling Youth for Evangelism" by Galen Burkholder.

Mennonite and Brethren in Christ involvement in Congress 88 will also include a joint display, a peace evangelism booth and an inter-Mennonite meeting. Rooms are being reserved for Mennonite and Brethren in Christ participants at the Travelodge, within walking distance of the Rosemont Horizon, where the main sessions will take place.

Registrations received by Apr. 30 are eligible for a discount. For more information or registration forms, contact Dale Shaw, 4411 Bee Ridge Road, Suite 444, Sarasota, FL 34233.



of specific, concentrated prayer. I'm sure the Graybills have sensed a lift as they were the foci of many prayers. (I'm even more encouraged to expect God to move in the hearts of my Japanese English students here in Philly.)

Through WCI releases I developed a real burden for Carol Geiger with a distressing back problem, mother of four, working on her thesis and at the same time carrying a burning desire for a ministry to needy women all around her in Colombia. I hope she felt supernatural support through those difficult days because of concentrated prayer for her.

It's exciting to read that so many couples now meet with Bob Geiger. We identified with the common problem of women coming to church without their husbands, who enjoy "being with the boys" more. Prayer has made this difference.

The new fields need your daily undergirding. The Brubakers in Bangkok struggle with a difficult

tonal language and John waits expectantly to hear there is a job for him. Meanwhile, demonic oppression is all around them, trying to keep the gospel out. Don't let them down. While the Siders and Edmonds adjust to the language and country of Malawi and carve out a new life style, many decisions need to be made regarding target areas. Care must be taken not to offend culturally. Then Nicole, a young teenager, needs significant peers. Knowing how wearing and frightening asthma attacks can be, I pray for Judy Smith in hot Senegal and the resistance they constantly feel against the gospel. What a delight to hear of the tiniest positive response. It's a hard field, but your prayers can make the difference in the survival of Jay and Judy.

Recently I came across a paragraph which captures the importance of prayer: "If you depend on programs, you will see what programs can do. If you depend on

funds, you will see what funds can do. If you depend on churches, you will see what churches can do. If you depend on prayer, you will see what God can do.

"The heartfelt supplication of a righteous man exerts a mighty influence" (see James 5:16). Do you really believe this?

Oswald Chambers says that prayer is not just a part of the work, it is the *main* work. Here is where you can all be involved, significantly!

After several terms of service in Africa with Brethren in Christ Missions, Ira (Pete) and Miriam Stern are developing a ministry to international students in Philadelphia, Pa.

World Christian Intercessors is promoted by Missions Prayer Fellowship in cooperation with Brethren in Christ World Missions. If you would like to become a World Christian Intercessor in 1988, contact Brethren in Christ World Missions, P.O. Box 390, Mount Joy, PA 17552.

'Peace Church' leaders meet

All agreed it was a meeting long overdue when leaders of the Historic Peace Churches got together for the first time in 20 years at Quaker Hill Conference Center in Richmond, Ind., Feb. 14-15.

Bishop Owen Alderfer represented the Brethren in Christ Church. John Stoner, also Brethren in Christ, was present representing MCC U.S. Peace Section.

The 18 leaders—representing the Mennonites, Brethren, and Quakers—made plans to work with peace churches in Europe to sponsor a worldwide gathering of Christians who practice non-violence against oppression. They hope the event will take place by fall 1989.

The significance of the meeting transcended the agenda. Donald Miller, general secretary of the Church of the Brethren general board, said the simple fact that the leaders met and got to know each other better was the highlight of the gathering.

The leaders focused their discussion on how the Historic Peace Churches can best contribute to the concern for peace

worldwide. They affirmed that their churches have much to contribute. One suggested that *living* peace churches was an appropriate description.

"The vision is still very much alive," said Gordon Browne, Jr., executive secretary of the Friends World Committee for Consultation. "We challenged each other and upheld each other to continue our witness.

"It was such a joy that we could start with a common understanding. This was very supportive and encouraging to all of us."

James Lapp, executive secretary of the Mennonite Church general board, said a spiritual focus enriched the gathering.

"There was a strong emphasis on meeting in a spirit of worship and discernment and not just to share programmatic concerns," he said.

New Call to Peacemaking, the cooperative peace organization of the three churches, sponsored the meeting. The churches have a long history of interaction and cooperation.

World War II and relief and recon-

struction efforts afterward provided many occasions for peace church leaders to consult. The leaders held fewer meetings after that, and none had taken place since 1968. Grassroots contacts, however, have increased through New Call to Peacemaking, founded in 1976.

The worldwide gathering the leaders discussed would be coordinated with Church and Peace, the peace church organization in Europe. It would focus on the actions of people practicing non-violence in places of oppression, such as the West Bank, Central America, South Africa, and the Philippines.

The purposes would be to encourage the people in those situations, to learn from them, and to provide models to other Christians on how to respond non-violently to revolutionary unrest.

Edgar Metzler, a Mennonite who is national coordinator of New Call to Peacemaking, said the leaders agreed that the Historic Peace Church witness is needed now as much as ever.

"We want to find ways to make visible to the world Christian community a peace witness that is not limited to opposition to nuclear weapons," he said, "but is the call of Jesus Christ for Christians everywhere." —by Paul Schrag, for Meetinghouse.



General Conference Information

As you read this, less than two months remain until the June 1 deadline for General Conference registrations. Use the form in the January issue of the *Visitor*. Your pastor may have extra copies. Or just make photo copies.

All people 18 years old and over, attending day sessions, should pay the registration fee. However, *all* children, women, and men should fill out FORM A and send it to the Convention Director. The only exceptions are those attending evening sessions only.

The first session of General Conference will open at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, July 2, 1988. You will need to arrive in time to register before noon. Try to arrive before 10:00 a.m. on Saturday. Registration at Conference is on Friday evening from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m., and on Saturday morning from 8:00 to 12 noon. The final Conference session is scheduled to conclude at noon on Thursday, July 7, but an afternoon session may be needed.

Many people are overlooking parts of the registration forms, or placing question marks in the blanks. Please wait to register until you are sure of your plans. Be sure to provide complete information on the church you plan to attend on Sunday morning and your transportation needs. It will be too late to request transportation after you arrive. No service will be conducted at Azusa on Sunday morning.

The following churches welcome you: Alta Loma, Chino, Chino Hills, Duarte Fellowship, Etiwanda, Gethsemane, Glendora, Lighthouse, Moreno, Morning Star, Ontario, Open Bible, Pomona, Riverside (evening service only), Upland, and Walnut. Why not visit one of the smaller churches this time?

By the time you read this, the air conditioned rooms at Azusa will probably be taken. There is, however, a cheerful note: The non-air conditioned rooms are larger and are nearer to the dining room and meeting places. Parents with children sleeping on the floor, *please note*: The linen pack-

age is not provided for your children. You will need to bring bedding for them. At past conferences, the linen packages have sometimes been picked up from other beds by mistake. Please do not let this happen. If children on the floor use linen packages, a \$15 charge will need to be made.

A vesper service, combining the features of previous afternoon and evening services on Sunday of General Conference, will convene from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. Dinner will be served from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. The Program Commission has not scheduled an evening service, but please note the following announcement.

For those who are interested, the drama "Jesus B.C.," by John T. Dugan, will be presented at 8:00 on Sunday evening. Directed by Dorcas Lady Good, it was staged at the Upland Church at their missions conference. According to Dorcas, "This drama is probably the best piece of religious dramatic literature I have had the privilege of producing in my years as dramatic instructor." Admission will be free.

Exciting events are planned for the youth attending General Conference. As noted in an announcement elsewhere in this issue the cost for each teenager is \$25 (U.S.). If details are not in your hands now, they soon should be.

MTS Travel, Ephrata, PA, is the official travel agency for this Conference. Anyone booked by them on United Airlines between June 18 and July 10 will receive a 5% discount. If you are planning to rent a car at your arrival airport, be sure to make your reservation *before* arrival. MTS can take care of this for you. Call MTS as follows: In PA—800-642-8315; other states—800-233-0157; Canada—717-733-4131.

If the information you need is not included above, check previous issues of the EV, starting with January. For other information, contact the Convention Director, Paul Hostetler, Grantham, PA 17027. Phones: (Office) 717-697-2634; (Home) 717-766-2621. You may leave a recorded message at the home number.

Evangelism and Missions Convention Information

The Brethren in Christ Evangelism and Missions Convention will be held during the two days prior to the 1988 General Conference. The convention is open to everyone. We encourage youth as well as adults to attend. Both missionaries and missions partners are invited.

You do not need to attend General Conference to attend the Evangelism and Missions Convention. However, to register, you must use the General Conference registration form, even if you will not be attending General Conference. If attending both conventions, you must register for both at the same time on the same General Conference form. You will receive one bill for room, board, and registration for

both conventions. This bill should be completely paid with one check prior to the Evangelism and Missions Convention.

There is no registration fee for the Evangelism and Missions Convention. The cost of meals and rooms is the same per unit as that of General Conference. For those lodging at Azusa Pacific University, a working cost figure (package plan) would be \$45.00. This includes two nights' lodging and six meals.

Registration will be on Thursday, June 30, from 12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m. The convention will convene at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday and close on Friday at 4:30 p.m.

Transportation to and from airports will be arranged by the General Conference staff (see registration form). Children's programs for children through age 11 will be held during the convention.

Sisters among the brethren

Sisters among the brethren: usually working behind the scenes, unrecognized and unsung; yet through their faith, fervent prayers and hard work, had a great deal to do with the growth of the church.

Whether praying alone or in groups, the women of the brethren in Christ fought spiritual battles over needs in their midst and ones far distant. At Wainfleet were several great women of prayer: Mary Ann Sider (Mrs. John Sider) often went to her bedside where she knelt and prayed. When her daughter, Nellie Sider Dick, went to India as a missionary wife, Mary Ann fasted and prayed every Friday. Eliza Sider (Mrs. Joe Sider) would walk out in a field and there pray alone to her God. Anna Sider (Mrs. Christian Sider) had her secret closet off her bedroom. Many church problems were settled because these holy women prayed them through.¹ At the Heise Hill Church in the early 1930s, a group of women began meeting on Tuesday afternoons for prayer: Hannah Baker Cober, Nancy Cober, Emma Henderson, Vera Spragg, Tena Steckley, and three Heises—Catherine, Ida and Ruth, plus others.² These prayer groups met in addition, of course, to the regular prayer meetings that were held for everyone.

Spiritual sensitivity was evident in many ways. Bishop John Sider's wife had a nice black wool dress, but Sunday after Sunday all through the winter she would wear a black print with a little white pattern. Someone asked her why she didn't wear her good dress because it would be much warmer. She replied, "Some of our sisters are poor and don't have a good black dress. I don't want them to feel that they can't come to church because they can't dress well enough. So I wear a print dress like theirs."³

In earlier days of the church, to have or not to have Sunday school was quite a large issue.

Before Wainfleet Brethren in Christ Church had a Sunday school, Mattie Sider Pye, her brother Earl Sider, and several girl friends walked a mile or so to

the Baptist Church in Perry for Sunday school. One day Mattie announced to her parents that she was going to join the Baptist Church. This shocked them and they said, "We must have Sunday school in our church or we will lose our children." Mrs. Sider took the initiative, but her husband had to get the idea across to the rest of the church people. The Siders paid for the Sunday school material and Bro. Sider was the first Sunday school superintendent. Bro. George Detwiler, who was a spiritual leader of the young people at Bertie Church at that time, commented that Anna Sider was the most qualified person to be a Sunday school superintendent then in Wainfleet, but because she was a woman she had to work through her husband.

Sunday schools became acceptable and more widely used, but operated under conditions that today would seem difficult. For instance, early in this century, the Heise Hill sanctuary had five classes on each side being conducted simultaneously, with no drapes or partitions to keep one's attention from wandering. And thus a child observed the following: in the "Amen Corner" was the older mens' class, and—

As they their viewpoints emphatically gave,

Many of them their hands would wave;
Each one thought that they were right,
That's what got them so uptight.

In the opposite corner the older women sat;

There we never saw any of that.
Their discussion was helpful; they were not bored,
But smiled and nodded in sweet accord.

Why the difference, thought I as a child?

These sisters all seemed so meek and mild;

They had learned submission from their spouse

(In the other class) who declared he was head of the house.⁴

Although it was usually the men who were called by the church, their women often bore the brunt of whatever sacrificing was needed.

When Chris and Cora Sider of Wainfleet congregation were asked to do "tent work" (evangelistic work) for a summer in Stayner and other places, Cora's initial reaction was "No, we can't consider it." With four little children, one a baby in diapers who had just recovered from double pneumonia; empty canning jars in the cellar that must be filled with fruit and vegetables for the long winter ahead; and a need for *some* money to be earned to buy essentials—how could they possibly go?

But the board refused to take a negative answer, and told them to pray some more about the decision.

In the next week and a half, prayer meetings and Sunday morning worship service at Wainfleet all focused on Matthew 6:25-33, "Take no thought for your life . . . what you shall eat . . ." etc., and Luke 12:22-31, "Take no thought for your life . . ." And Cora, even though it seemed "ridiculous and unreasonable," said "yes" with her husband to the call.

And as the Lord had promised, their needs were met: when they arrived at Stayner, two girls appeared, saying that they would look after the cooking and laundry for Cora; the baby seemed to be under divine protection; when they returned to Wainfleet, they discovered that the Wainfleet sisters had filled most of her jars with fruit; and their potatoes and corn in the garden, even though neglected all summer, yielded bumper crops.

Says Cora Sider today, "Never be afraid to obey God, to step out on his promises. He is always true to his Word."⁵

—Compiled by Doris Cober

¹As told by Cora Sider.

²As told by Luella Heise Lofthouse.

³As told by Cora Sider.

⁴From "Heise Hill Sunday School (1885)," written by Mary Cober for 100th Anniversary; September 1985.

⁵As told by Cora Sider.

Warehouse Manager

Warehouse manager needed at the MCC Material Aid Center in North Newton, KS to supervise shipping, receiving, and packing. Volunteers preferred; applicants for salaried position will be considered. For more information/application, contact MCC Personnel Services, Box M, Akron, PA 17501. Phone (717) 859-1151.

Nicaraguan government and Miskito Indian leaders sign agreement

by Andrea Schrock Wenger

Representatives of the Nicaraguan government and resistance leaders from Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast region signed an agreement in Managua February 2.

The agreement includes a broad range of political, economic, and social issues. It is the first agreement signed in Nicaragua resulting in a substantial preliminary agreement between Indian resistance leaders and the Nicaraguan government. Further negotiations on still unresolved issues are to begin March 1.

The East Coast delegation to the negotiating table in Managua was headed by Brooklyn Rivera, leader of YATAMA, an umbrella organization formed in June 1987 by exiled groups based in Honduras and Costa Rica. The government delegation was headed by Nicaraguan Interior Minister Tomás Borge, who directs policy on the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua.

A crucial step for Rivera and other YATAMA leaders before the March 1 dialogue will be reporting on the agreement to East Coast resistance leaders who did not participate in the talks, including Wycliffe Diego and Steadman Fagoth Mueller. Also results of this first round of talks will need to be communicated to Atlantic Coast refugees in Honduras and Costa Rica.

Instrumental in the February 2 negotiations was a conciliation commission, made up of members agreed upon by both negotiating parties. The commission was headed by Rev. Andy Shogreen, superintendent of the Moravian Church in Nicaragua. Also participating were Dr. Owyn Hudgson, a lawyer, Jorge Frederick and Norman Bent, all of the Moravian Church; Dr. Gustavo Parajón, a Baptist pastor who is on the Nicaraguan Reconciliation Commission

and is president of CEPAD, an evangelical Protestant relief organization; and a consulting assistant provided by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), John Paul Lederach, the only North American directly involved in the negotiations.

"One of the greatest achievements was simply that the two groups met face-to-face in Nicaragua despite historic disagreement and deep-rooted mistrust," said Lederach, who recently returned from Managua to his home in Akron, Pa.

Recent events reflect long history

The East Coast region conflict has been going on for eight years, but the attitudes and prejudices that feed it have existed for decades. The indigenous people of Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast live in a region that covers nearly half of Nicaragua's territory, but they comprise only 10 percent of the population.

The area was incorporated into Nicaragua in 1894 by then President Jose Santos Zelaya, whose name the region now bears. The Miskito (numbering about 85,000), Sumo (numbering about 9,000) and Rama (numbering about 850) Indians and two groups, Creoles and Garifunas, descended from African slaves (numbering about 27,000) have long mistrusted people from the Pacific side of Nicaragua. But in recent years these groups have begun to articulate more clearly their historic demands to land, resources and self-government.

In general the people of the East Coast have not participated actively in national politics, and they played little role in the 1979 Sandinista revolution. Since 1981 the East Coast resistance has been fighting the Sandinistas, but they generally do not identify with the counterrevolutionary (contra) cause. "They see themselves as having a historical right to the land they are fighting for and they are not interested in achieving power in Managua, but rather in the East Coast," says Lederach.

There often is confusion on this point, he reports, because there has been some collaboration with the Nicaraguan resistance in the past. YATAMA does not view the contra cause as "any kind of option," and is disillusioned with the complete lack of an East Coast auton-

omy project among the contras and by the manipulation of their cause by the counterrevolution and the CIA, says Lederach.

Agreements reached in the February negotiations set a basic foundation for the return to civilian life in the region, summarizes Lederach. The agreement: reaffirms the Indians' rights to land and water resources on land the people have traditionally occupied; commits increased government assistance to reconstruction of communities affected by the war; reaffirms the right to exercise autonomy and includes establishment of YATAMA as a civic and political organization representing the East Coast communities once a formal cease-fire is reached; and guarantees cooperation between autonomous regional governments and the central government on the use and development of East Coast resources. Aspects of autonomy regarding economic and political measures are still subject to further discussion.

While a number of key military questions were not finalized during the negotiations, it was agreed that both sides will avoid provocative action until another round of talks, beginning March 1, that are expected to lead to a formal cease-fire.

"One of the greatest achievements was simply that the two groups met face-to-face"
—Lederach

But the dialogue continues to be vulnerable to efforts by outside forces to undermine negotiations. "The Indian question has been very manipulated," commented Rev. Andy Shogreen, who has been deeply involved in the dialogue since 1985. In a recent CEPAD newsletter Shogreen said, "There have been efforts from both within and without to undermine the (negotiation) process. There are people and governments, especially in the United States, interested in seeing the Indians unite with the contras." The official U.S. policy has discouraged an independent Indian negotiation with the Sandinistas, preferring them to join the contra negotiation efforts.

Nevertheless, the February agreement was a step forward and created the possibility of repatriation of large numbers of remaining Indian people to their

Mennonite Central Committee is the relief, service and development agency of North American Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches. The Moravian Church in Nicaragua, which has a broad constituency among the Indians, is an independent "province" within the worldwide Moravian Church unit. The Board of World Mission of the Moravian Church represents two North American provinces that are in a sister church relationship with the Moravian Church in Nicaragua.

homelands. Some 25 to 30 percent of the East Coast refugees have returned in recent years to their homeland, but many—likely around 25,000—continue to live outside the country, most in refugee camps in Honduras. Estimates vary as to how many Indian refugees exist, because only those with official refugee status and a U.N. identification card can be counted.

If the March negotiations go well, Lederach predicts that many Indians will move home under the direction of a commission made up of Nicaraguan government officials, YATAMA representatives, Moravian and Catholic church members, and representatives from CEPAD, the organization through which MCC channels most of its material aid to Nicaragua. Commission guidelines were in the February 2 agreement.

The process of repatriation, which has been going on and likely will accelerate, has been occurring with the support of the UNHCR (United Nations High Commission on Refugees) and of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

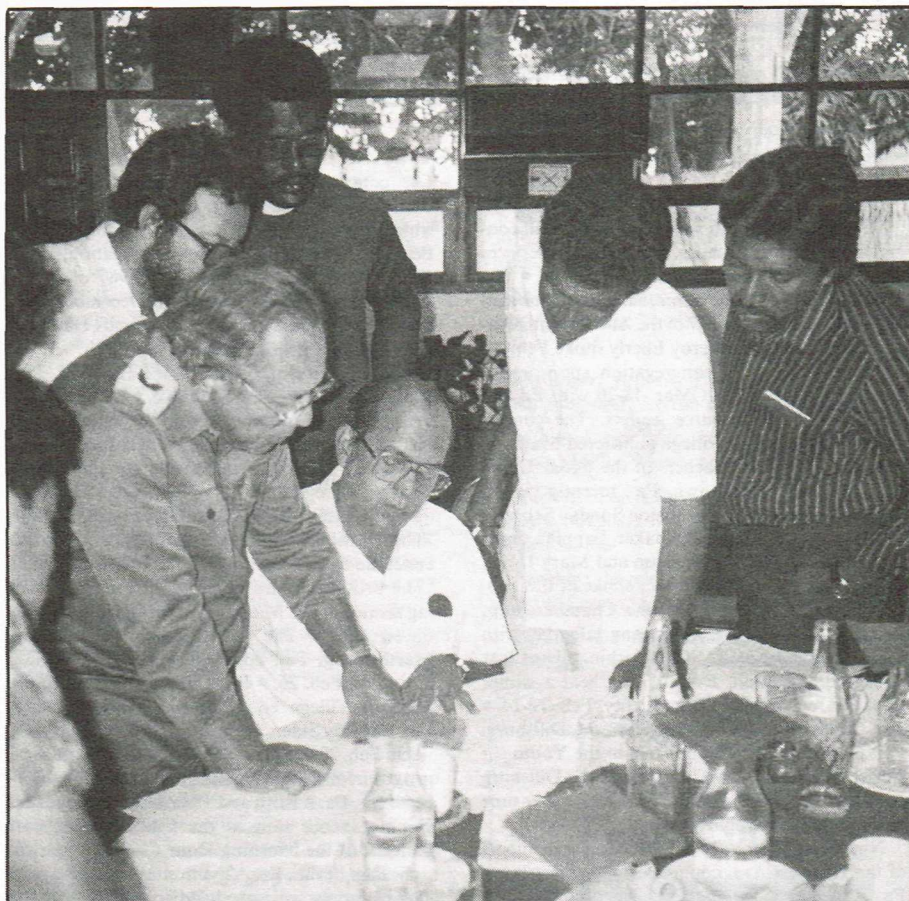
The mediation process

In March Lederach hopes to return to Managua to assist the conciliation commission again. While he had been doing conciliation training through MCC in Central America since 1984, his role in this dialogue began in the fall of 1987. Throughout the months of the process, Lederach has been impressed with the role of the churches and especially prayer.

After the first meeting between Nicaraguan Moravian church leaders and members of the Indian resistance, Lederach wrote: "We stood in a circle and held hands. I had mixed feelings as I held hands with Commander Coyote (a resistance leader) and the head of the Indian Women's Association. The prayer (led by Indian resistance leader Modesto Watson) ended: 'Lord, we think of King Solomon who asked not for riches or power, but for wisdom. We ask the same, not that we get rich or have power. But give us wisdom, Lord, to act and choose as we should.'"

During informal gatherings in Costa Rica and the formal negotiations in Managua, each meeting began with Bible reading and prayer, says Lederach. Prayer also played a powerful role in the United States where Moravian church members held 24 hour prayer vigils in support of the ongoing dialogue.

Throughout the months of his involve-



On February 2 Nicaraguan Government officials and East Coast Indian resistance leaders negotiated a historic agreement in Managua. Pictured discussing the agreement are, from left to right, Tomás Borge, Nicaraguan Ministry of Interior; Armando Rojas, a lawyer for the National Assembly; Rev. Andy Shogreen, representative from the Moravian church in Nicaragua and head of the negotiation's conciliatory commission; Dr. Gustavo Parajón (seated), member of the Nicaraguan Reconciliation Commission and president of CEPAD; Brooklyn Rivera, East Coast resistance leader; and Marcos Hoppington, a Miskito Indian delegate to the negotiations.

Milton Argüello

ment in the negotiating process, Lederach began to sense he was being watched by contra and CIA operatives in San Jose, Costa Rica. But he and his family were shocked when they learned the watching had gone beyond phone tapping.

In November, according to several Indian sources, there was a plot to kidnap Lederach's 3-year-old daughter in San Jose. The plot, which involved a Cuban-American CIA contract operative and several contras aligned with the Nicaraguan Resistance, was aimed at getting Lederach out of the peace process.

But Lederach was tipped off about the plot and he, his wife Wendy and their daughter Angie left the country immediately. At this point, though shaken, he decided to continue as an intermediary in the peace talks because he felt he had an important role to play.

In another incident in early December

a plot was uncovered to assassinate Lederach, Lutheran Pastor Ulrich Epperlein, and Moravian Pastor Higgins Miller, all of whom were working with Atlantic Coast refugees in Costa Rica. Lederach was again informed by an inside source that \$50,000 was to be paid to complete the plot and get the mediators out of the process.

Despite the risks and frustration of seemingly endless obstacles, ongoing negotiations between the East Coast leaders and Nicaraguan government will be crucial to ending the war and rebuilding. If the war on the East Coast were to end tomorrow, Rev. Shogreen has said, "the people would need to rebuild both materially and spiritually. We need a lot of outside aid to rebuild these communities. There are hurt feelings and resentments. We hope that as a church we can participate very actively in this process of practicing forgiveness and starting again."

Church News

Allegheny Conference

Feb. 7-14 was youth week for the **Air Hill** congregation, Chambersburg, Pa. Revival services with Arthur Climenhaga were Feb. 21-24. • The Speers from Nashville, Tenn., sang in a combined morning service on Feb. 7 of the **Antrim** congregation, Chambersburg. Leroy Eberly spoke Feb. 21. • The **Carlisle**, Pa., congregation sponsored a married couples retreat Mar. 18-20 with Ed and Prue Yelick as resource leaders. The concert choir from Messiah College ministered Mar. 6. • The Sunday school teachers of the **Cedar Grove** congregation, Mifflintown, Pa., recently viewed the film, "The Great Commission Sunday School."

A. Graybill and Ethel Brubaker, Fannie Longenecker, Carissa Stains, William and Mary Hoke, and Robert and Bobbi Snyder spoke at the Feb. 7-14 missions conference of the **Chambersburg**, Pa., church. March 6 was spring rally day with Tim James and Amanda Gail Corbin. • The **Clear Creek** congregation, Everett, Pa., held a winter weekend revival with Lorne Lichty, Feb. 12-14. • The **Cumberland Valley** congregation, Dillsburg, Pa., planned a Mar. 26 bus trip to the Youth for Christ passion play. • The ladies of the **Dillsburg** congregation had a Feb. 23 share and prayer time at the home of Kathy Renard.

Nine persons recently were received as members of the **Fairview Ave.** congregation, Waynesboro, Pa. The 30s and 40s group had their annual Trivial Pursuit night on Feb. 19. All-church roller skating was Mar. 10 sponsored by grades 1-6. • On Feb. 28, a choir from Messiah College sang at the **Five Forks** church, Waynesboro, Pa. The film "Kevin Can Wait" was shown during the Sunday school hour. • The youth of the **Grantham**, Pa., congregation recently presented a musical, "The Clown."

The congregation observed Peace Sunday on Mar. 6. Titus and Linda Peachey led a forum which included the slide set, "Making War in Peace." • The **Green Spring** congregation, Newville, Pa., set and met a goal in 1987 of a new family a month from March to December. The congregation planned a Mar. 6 Friends Day with an attendance goal of 175.

The women's ministries of the **Hanover**, Pa., church planned a Mar. 1 sub sale. • Dr. D. Logan presented his testimony at a Feb. 13 men's breakfast at the **Hollowell** church, Waynesboro, Pa. • "Circle of Two" was the theme for the **Locust Grove** congregation, York, Pa., sweetheart banquet at Rutter's Restaurant. On Feb. 28, the film "The Possibility Sunday School" was shown to conclude a teachers' meeting. • Guest musicians "The Brothers" contributed to the Feb. 28 morning service of the **Marlyn Ave.** congregation, Baltimore, Md. • The Home Builders class of the **Martinsburg**, Pa., congregation had a bowling outing on Feb. 26. • Preaching on Feb. 14 to the **Messiah Village** congregation, Mechanicsburg, Pa., was Ray Sider, director of Timber Bay Home.

On Feb. 28, the New Dimensions gave a musical program for the **Montgomery** congregation, Mercersburg, Pa. • Ruth and Eber Dourte spoke and Connie Jacobs sang at the Feb. 19 sweetheart banquet of the **Morning Hour Chapel** congregation, East Berlin, Pa. A hymn sing with the Albert Jacobs family was scheduled for Feb. 28. • The **Mt. Rock** congregation gave a Feb. 28 Sunday school workers appreciation dinner. • Director of Stewardship Merle Brubaker was guest for the **Roseglen** congregation's sweetheart banquet, Duncannon, Pa. • The youth of the **West Shore** congregation, Enola, Pa., had a roller skating party Feb. 1.

New resource for deacons available

Called to Caregiving: A Resource for Equipping Deacons in the Believers Church, a 175-page booklet, is now available from Brethren Press in Elgin, Ill.

Seven functions of a deacon—serving, nurturing, healing, worshipping, discipling, presence and advocating—are examined in this resource. It also includes information to help people understand the biblical and historical role and function of a deacon and what it means to be a deacon today.

The resource was developed because denominations want to revitalize the role and ministry of deacons within congregations, says Jay Gible, who directed the project. Undergirding the project, Gible says, is the belief that "deacons and pastor can and should be a positive force in nurturing persons to wholeness in Jesus Christ."

Called to Caregiving emphasizes that

deacons are called to give care in ways that embody Christ's love for others. A comprehensive training design to help prepare deacons for ministry is also included.

Called to Caregiving also features sample stories of how deacons ministered in eight congregations, an annotated bibliography and an appendix that includes various materials that can be reproduced.

This resource was developed by the Mental Health Awareness and Education Committee, with the help of a grant from Mennonite Mutual Aid Association. The Mental Health Awareness and Education Committee is a joint committee of Mennonite Mental Health Services and Brethren Health and Welfare Association.

For a copy, send \$7.95 to Brethren Press, 1451 Dundee Avenue, Elgin, IL 60120.

Atlantic Conference

The **Community Bible** congregation, Sarasota, Fla., took the occasion of a Feb. 12 Valentine party to honor longtime members John and Dorothy Stockslager with a gift and testimonies. • On Feb. 3, Fannie Longenecker promoted use of the World Christian Intercessors materials at the MPF meeting of the **Cross Roads** congregation, Mt. Joy, Pa. Eight persons were baptized recently. • The film "The Prodigal" was shown Feb. 14 at the **Elizabethtown**, Pa., church. The Pioneer Girls held a Daddy's Sweetheart evening on Feb. 28 with games, movie, and snack. • Arthur Climenhaga preached Feb. 28 to the **Fairland** congregation, Cleona, Pa. • The **Free Grace** congregation, Millersburg, Pa., planned spring revival services for Mar. 20-27 with Thomas Frantz, Bellefonte, Pa.

The **Hershey**, Pa., congregation recently had cake after the morning service to celebrate its second birthday. • The **Holden Park** congregation, Orlando, Fla., had a kick-off dinner Feb. 14 for their 50-Day Adventure. Alfred Brandt was guest vocalist and song leader. • Feb. 14 was come-as-you-work Sunday for the **Hummelstown**, Pa., congregation. • Discipleship meetings Feb. 13-17 at the **Lancaster**, Pa., church featured Henry Ginder as speaker. The Diamond Street Mission choir sang Feb. 21. The congregation hosted the Atlantic Conference Board for Congregational Life Festival on Feb. 28. • The Speers gave a gospel concert on Feb. 5 at the **Manor** church, Mountville, Pa. On family night, Feb. 27, the congregation enjoyed a potluck supper and the film "The Hiding Place."

The **Mastersonville** congregation, Manheim, Pa., sponsored a Feb. 6 banquet at the Cross Roads church with musicians Alice Dourte, Lamar Dourte, and Kay Wenger, and psychologist Dr. Canfield. • The **Mt. Pleasant** congregation, Mt. Joy, Pa., joined the 50-Day Adventurers on Feb. 14-Apr. 3. A "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner" was Mar. 12. • On Mar. 23, Andrea Hoke, summer missions coordinator for the Board for World Missions, spoke to the **Pequea** congregation, Lancaster, Pa., about opportunities in Teen Mission and Operation Mobilization. • The **Ref-ton**, Pa., congregation viewed the "Turn Your Heart Toward Home" film series Feb. 14-Mar. 20. • On Feb. 21, the Messiah College group Reflections sang in an evening service for the **Silverdale**, Pa., congregation.

The **Skyline View** congregation, Harrisburg, Pa., planned a ski trip for Feb. 12-13, staying overnight in a Scranton church. • Warren Hoffman spoke in renewal services at the **Speedwell Heights** church, Lititz, Pa., Feb. 28-Mar. 2. • The **Summit View** congregation, New Holland, Pa., had a make-your-own-sundae social on Feb. 14. The congregation had a record breaking attendance of 144 in an evening service. • The Atlantic Regional Conference theme Mar. 25-26 was "Our Holy God: Up Close and Personal." • Four promotional dinners for Timber Bay Home took place between Feb. 25 and Mar. 7 at Chambersburg, Bux Mont, Lancaster, and Messiah Village.

Canadian Conference

Henry Ginder held revival meetings Mar. 6-13 for the **Cheapside** congregation, Nanticoke, Ont. • The Gordon Gilmore family was with the **Heise Hill** congregation, Gormley, Ont., on Feb. 7 for services and a fellowship dinner. The family fellowship committee sponsored a lawn bowling outing Feb. 20. • An Emmanuel Bible College team

provided music in the Feb. 7 service of the **Houghton** congregation, Langton, Ont. • The **Massey Place** church, Saskatoon, Sask., greeted 1988 with four new endeavors: men's, women's, college and career, and children's music ministries. Church workers met with Dale Shaw recently for a motivational gathering.

On Feb. 14, the **North East Community** congregation had a "Sharing God's Love" continental breakfast with music by Blair and Carol Hamilton. • The church board and building committee of the **Oak Ridges**, Ont., congregation met Feb. 23 to review their feasibility study. A homecoming gospel sing was planned for Mar. 12. A Rogers organ has been donated to the church. • The **Prince Albert**, Sask., congregation is beginning the GRADE program. A young people's group, ages 10-13, met for the first time Feb. 6. Feb. 7 was Koinonia Sunday, with soup and sandwich fellowship luncheons. • On Feb. 8, the Women's Ministries of the **Ridgemount** congregation, Hamilton, Ont., met with Ethel Sider from India. Eileen Sherk from Zambia shared with the congregation on Feb. 14.

The youth group of the **Rosebank** congregation, Petersburg, Ont., had a busy February: Confab Night, Feb. 13; winter retreat at Niagara Christian College, Feb. 19-21; Teen Mission film "Second Step," Feb. 28. A Bible conference with Morris Sider was scheduled for Mar. 19-20. • Greg Funk was speaker Mar. 2-6 for renewal meetings at the **Sherkston**, Ont., church. • The **Springvale** congregation, Hagersville, Ont., recently had a carry-in dinner to honor Elizabeth Heise's 80th birthday and bid her farewell. • The evangelism committee of the **Wainfleet**, Ont., congregation has begun making tracts available for congregational use. Five boys recently either accepted the Lord or renewed commitments through the Christian Service Brigade Stockade group.

Central Conference

The **Amherst** congregation, Massillon, Ohio, participated in February in a project day in conjunction with Habitat for Humanity. • A senior citizens dinner was planned for Mar. 13 by the **Christian Union** congregation, Garrett, Ind. The congregation has covenanted with the Board for World Missions to pray for a particular missionary couple each week. • The **Dayton**, Ohio, congregation had "singles month" in January, honoring five singles for their contributions to the church. • The Jackson family ministered in music on Feb. 21 to the **Fairview** congregation, Englewood, Ohio. • On Feb. 14, Fred and Grace Holland challenged the **Highland** congregation, West Milton, Ohio, regarding missions.

On Feb. 21, Holly Whiting, and Dola and Linda Bye gave reports on their summer projects with Teen Missions to the **Lakeview** congregation, Goodrich, Mich. • "Love in the Family" was the theme for the family Valentine banquet Feb. 14 of the **Mooretown** congregation, Sandusky, Mich. The catered banquet was followed by a puppet show. • The **Peace Chapel** congregation, Ravenna, Ohio, recently viewed the movies "A Thief in the Night," "A Distant Thunder," and "The Mark of the Beast" in connection with their study of Revelation. The congregation reports a steady growth of attendance: Feb. '86, 62; Feb. '87, 71; Feb. '88, 81.

On Feb. 24, the **Sippo Valley** congregation, Massillon, Ohio, enjoyed the junior youth group's award-winning chili and tacos. The youth led a service afterward. • Two young people from the **Union Grove** congregation, New Paris, Ind., received special honors recently: Julie Simpson

scored high as an eighth grader on the SAT test; and Shannon McGarvey received a superior rating in piano at state competition. • Luke Keefer, Jr., spoke in revival meetings Feb. 28-Mar. 2 at the **Western Hills** church, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Midwest Conference

Pastor Scott Miles of the **Abilene**, Ks., has announced his resignation effective July 1. A neighbor night carry-in, a men's breakfast, and Sunday services were highlights of special services Feb. 26-28 with Charles and Elaine Norman. • The youth of the **Bethany** congregation, Thomas, Okla., sponsored a country breakfast Feb. 14 to help fund a ski trip in March. • The **Fellowship** church, Cedar Hill, Tex., hosted the Feb. 15-16 meeting of the Board for Evangelism and Church Planting. • The **Oak Park** congregation, Des Moines, Iowa, has begun a monthly ladies Bible study and fellowship at the parsonage. • The **Oklahoma City**, Okla., congregation recently began viewing the video series "How to Manage Your Money" about experiencing peace in financial matters. • Wayne Bignell has accepted a one year term as pastor of the **Mt. View** congregation, Colorado Springs, Colo. • The **Rosebank** congregation, Hope, Ks., hosted Regional Conference Mar. 18-19.

Pacific Conference

The **Moreno Community** congregation, Moreno Valley, Calif., has a new member by baptism. "Christ in the Passover" was the theme of a Jews for Jesus message on Feb. 14. • Feb. 28 was "100 percent Sunday" at the **Ontario**, Calif., church to celebrate the installation of a new balcony and the growth of the congregation. • The Sunday evening service Feb. 14 of the **Pacific Highway** congregation, Salem, Ore., was a program of inspiration, music, fellowship, and refreshments. • Five members were received recently by the **Redwood Country** church, Grants Pass, Ore. An Action in Missions potluck and meeting were held Feb. 7 after the service. • The women of the **Riverside**, Calif., congregation had a night out together to discuss women and intimacy. The children went on Mar. 5 to see the dinosaurs at the San Bernadino County Museum. • The women's fellowship of the **Upland**, Calif., congregation had an evening Feb. 25 on "Creativity . . . God's Gift to You" featuring fabric and floral design. The Wind Ensemble of Wheaton College, Ill., played Mar. 6 in morning and evening services.

For the Record

Births

Bollin: Thomas Lee, Feb. 11; Thomas Bollin and Sue Harris, Western Hills congregation, Ohio.

Bowman: Michael Ryan, Sept. 22, 1986; Paul and Deborah Bowman, Manor congregation, Pa.

Collier: Andrew James, Jan. 15; Robert and Andres (Tompkins) Collier, Wainfleet congregation, Ont.

Flagg: Andrew Christopher, Jan. 8; Christopher and Jennifer (Hurtubise) Flagg, Wainfleet congregation, Ont.

French: Trevyn Dane, Feb. 2; Dane and Kirsten (Erbaugh) French, Highland congregation, Ohio.

Frey: Ethan Armor, Feb. 5; Quintin and Cheryl (Cline) Frey, Millersville congregation, Pa.

Graver: Kevin James, Feb. 13; Jan and Janet (Heisey) Graver, Manor congregation, Pa.

Huerter: Jennifer Marie, Jan. 29; Joachim and Nancy Huerter, Elizabethtown congregation, Pa.

Kroeker: Cameron Brian, Feb. 15; Keith and Tamara (Peerenboom) Kroeker, Pacific Highway congregation, Pa.

Link: Andrew Michael, Feb. 15; Curtis and JoEllen Link, Bethel Community congregation, Mich.

Manubay: Grace Lim, Nov. 10; Celso and Rosie Manubay, North East Community congregation, Alb.

Mellinger: Brittany Lynn, Jan. 21; Carl and Janet Mellinger, Refton congregation, Pa.

Miller: Luree Mae, Jan. 1; Craig and Karen (Brown) Miller, Manor congregation, Pa.

Musser: Travis Dewight, Feb. 10; Dwight and Joanne (Gruber) Musser, Mount Pleasant congregation, Pa.

Peachey: Nicole Mary, Jan. 20; Dennis and Cristine Peachey, Cedar Grove congregation, Pa.

Perkins: Gabriel Rex, Jan. 29; Barry and Verlee Perkins, Mound Park congregation, Iowa.

"Women who knew Christ"



A drama/music presentation by Melodie Narramore Yocum

An inspirational/fellowship meeting for the spouses of ministers, administrators, and missionaries, sponsored by the wives of the Bishops and the General Secretary.

**General
Conference 1988
Azusa Pacific University
Monday evening,
July 4, 9:00 p.m.**

There will be an offering to cover expenses.

Poist: Alicia Marie, Feb. 25; James and Karen Poist, Hanover congregation, Pa.

Reiff: Chelsea Alana, Nov. 19; Dennis and Anna Mary (Byers) Reiff, Lansdale, Pa.

Rhoades: Tenley Marie, Jan. 11; Todd and Tina (Vance) Rhoades, Highland congregation, Ohio.

Rohrer: J. Lamar Rohrer, Feb. 15; Doug and Martha Rohrer, Refton congregation, Pa.

Sanchez: Paul Danilo, Feb. 1; Jaime and Barbara (Buckwalter) Sanchez, Stowe congregation, Pa.

Stump: Kyle Richard, Jan. 28; Doug and Kim Stump, Upland congregation, Calif.

Thrush: Brett Randall, Dec. 21; Jerry and Karen Thrush, Antrim congregation, Pa.

Wark: Matthew William George, Feb. 7; George and Bonnie Wark, North East Community congregation, Alb.

Weaver: Kevin Lee, Feb. 5; Randy and Betty Weaver, Bethany congregation, Okla.

Williamson: John Joseph, Jan. 8; Ellis and Janice Williamson, North East Community congregation, Alb.

Wolf: Nikolaus Anthony, Jan. 28; Doug and Rita Wolf, North East Community congregation, Alb.

Wolgemuth: Kevin Scott, Feb. 9; Dwight and Roxanne Wolgemuth, Mt. Pleasant congregation, Pa.

Zeager: Devin Neil, Feb. 12; Ed and Yvonne Zeager, Cross Roads congregation, Pa.

Zuck: Julie Cherise, Dec. 24; James and Nancy Zuck, Elizabethtown congregation, Pa.

Weddings

Diffenderfer-Shertzer: Karen, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Shertzer, and Brian, son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Diffenderfer, Feb. 13, in Cedar Grove Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Stephen Russell officiating.

Long-Sorace: Renee, daughter of Al and Bonnie Sorace, Mifflintown, Pa., and Kenneth, son of Kenneth and Thelma Long, Elizabethtown, Pa., Oct. 10, 1987, at Elizabethtown Brethren in Christ Church.

McCombs-Keuken: Evelyn Diana, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Gus Keuken, Stouffville, Ont.,

Money Matters

An interview with Harry E. Martens

*(Maggie Glick is the editor of **Sharing**, the publication of Mennonite Mutual Aid. With her permission, the following article is being published in "Money Matters." Harry Martens has served the Mennonite Church in many capacities through the years, beginning at Bethel College, North Newton, KS. Retired now, he and his wife Olga live in Elkhart, Ind. What Martens says about the Mennonites applies with equal force to the Brethren in Christ. And so, when "Mennonites" appears, just insert "Brethren in Christ." —Paul Hostetler)*

Harry, why are we talking about money?

Harry: We're talking about money because money is one of the most important subjects we could talk about.

As Milo Kauffman points out in his book *The Challenge of Christian Stewardship* (Herald Press, 1955), half of Jesus' recorded teachings deal with money and property. This is more than on prayer, judgment, regeneration, and many other subjects we might name.

Why is this, do you think?

Harry: Well, it isn't because Jesus was so interested in money for himself. His holdings were very modest, as you know. But he knew exactly what would happen to people when and if this would get them. It's all right to get money, but don't let money get you!

I've heard you mention "the money test." What's "the money test"?

Harry: In both the Old and New Testaments we can see clearly, I feel, that what we really are—how deep our faith is—often can be measured by how we make money, how we use it, how we spend it. In short, our ideas and attitudes about money reveal our faithfulness—or lack of it.

So a person isn't necessarily successful because he or she has wealth?

Harry: To answer that there are three myths about money we need to look at.

Myth No. 1: "*Money is bad; it's filthy lucre.*" I insist money in itself is not bad. If it's bad it's because we have made it so.

Myth No. 2: "*The persons who has more than someone else certainly must have got it through devious means, or then he's selfish.*" Now there are those among us who are guilty of this. But when we toss all rich people into the same basket, we do wrong to many.

Some people have the gift of making money, so why not look at it as a gift from God, always remembering that where God entrusts much there is more responsibility and opportunity?

Myth No. 3: "*Money is a private matter; we mustn't talk about it.*" We're quick on that one. But I say we should be much more open about money—how we get it, earn it, spend it, use it. I think we can do a better job of Christianizing our money if we talk more about it.

Let's go back to the person who has a gift for making money. Tell me about him or her.

Harry: I feel it's my job to help him, as a brother, to use his gift and to encourage him to make more, perhaps. In fact, I've written a title for a future talk: "The Extension of the Church of Jesus Christ Depends on the Making of Money." This sounds paradoxical, but it's exactly what I believe and have experienced.

One reason I am here (in the United States) and not in overseas missions or relief work—where I know the need is great—is that I feel led to carry and share this message: Those

and Carl Leroy, son of Mrs. Mabel McCombs, Jarvis, Ont., and the late Norman McCombs, Jan. 23 at Cheapside Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Kenneth Case officiating.

Palcic-Engle: Melanie Joy, daughter of Earl and Esther Engle, Colorado City, Colo., and Frank Michael, son of Bertha Palcic, Wierton, W. Va., Dec. 19 at the First Presbyterian Church, Colorado Springs, with Rev. Jack J. Schilthuis and Rev. Richard Lord officiating.

Perry-Day: Eileen Ann Day, and James Richard Perry, Jr., son of James and Joetta Perry, West Milton, Ohio, Dec. 5, at the Highland Brethren in Christ Church.

Royer-Fuhrer: Shelby J. Fuhrer and Jacob H. Royer, Feb. 6, in the Pequea Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Paul F. Keefer, Jr., officiating.

Shellenberger-Renninger: Rosetta Renninger, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Schrader, and John, son of Mr. and Mrs. Leo Shellenberger, Jan. 30, in Cedar Grove Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. James Taylor officiating.

Obituaries

Beare: Ida Swartzendruber Beare, born in Hartford, Ks., died Jan. 28. She attended the Upland Brethren in Christ Church for over 20 years and was a member of the Mennonite Church. She married George Beare in 1926 and they spent 26 years as missionaries in India. Services were held at Albany, Ore., and at Bellevue Mausoleum with Rev. D. King, Rev. L. Lehman, Rev. Allan Yoder, and Rev. A. C. Burkholder officiating. Entombment was in Bellevue Mausoleum.

Charles: Raymond W. Charles, born April 13, 1931, died Feb. 18. He is survived by his wife, Florence; two daughters, Linda J. Trumble and Debra J. Parmer; one brother, Aldus W.; and a sister, Irene W. Lindsay. Raymond attended the Pequea Brethren in Christ Church where the funeral was held with Rev. Paul Keefer and Rev. Jim Gilbert officiating. Interment was in the church cemetery.

Cochran: Milton B. Cochran, born Feb. 2, 1920, the son of William R. and Sarah E. (Kerstetter) Cochran, died Jan. 29. He was preceded in death by his wife Helen E. (Moser Birely). He is survived by a step-son, William L. Birely; a sister, Violet Clapper; and a brother, Wilton. Services were held at the Woodbury Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. H. Lee Ritchey, Bishop Irvin Zimmerman, Rev. Mervin Martin, and Rev.

Money Test

by Maggie Glick

who earn the money are equally as needed as those who are called "to go."

Even though many of us are volunteers or on minimum salaries, it takes somebody's money—contributed money—to buy the needed supplies and to pay the transportation. I realize that encouraging the earning of money isn't what the youth of the 1960s tried to tell us. We may raise questions about their attitudes. But they certainly caused us to reevaluate this matter of having a big estate. Dozens of parents refer to this in our conversations. It caused us to come back to a more realistic attitude.

But there are some hazards in wealth, aren't there?

Harry: Oh, yes. We must never feel secure in riches. We need to check ourselves, every day, whether or not we are trusting in riches. This is true for the person with little as well as for the person with much.

The rich ruler who talked with our Lord didn't have a problem because he had possessions, but because his possessions had him!

We will make mistakes in earning, spending, and using. But we must continue to try to be faithful. I think this is why we have worship services, why we are in a brotherhood. We need each other's help in money matters as well as in other things of the Christian life.

I met a man who learned this lesson. He had had one aim: to make money. Then he had an extraordinary experience—sometimes it's catastrophic—which stopped him and he did a complete turnaround. A few months earlier he would not have talked with me or anyone about money—unless it was to earn more! Now he sought me out. He had a new vision of what his money and his possessions could do to help extend the witness of the church of Jesus Christ.

What other perils confront the rich person?

Harry: There's a proverb that says, "Love people, use money." There's a temptation to love money and use people to earn more money. I would say again, you need to know as clearly as possible why you are earning money and what your money is doing. What are your motive and purpose?

How do we resolve the rather common assumption that we need to make more money because the standard of living will keep rising and so will our expectations? Do you see this as an endless "rat race"?

Harry: At the rate we've been going in recent years, I think it's virtually deadly. I perceive a real reckoning—maybe not in our time, but certainly in our children's time—on our attitude toward wealth. We will have to come to grips with it or it will hurt, if not ruin, the effectiveness of the church.

I recently spent time working through this. I was astonished at how many people are apprehensive about what money is doing to us. John Drescher wrote in *Gospel Herald*, "Many persons can handle poverty. But they fail with success and prosperity."

An emigrant from Russia to Canada wrote in one of our church periodicals that the reason Mennonites in Russia were persecuted during the revolution there was because "they asked for it." He shocked many readers and they took him to task. But he feels they suffered with others in Russia because many had become wealthy. As their pocketbooks became thicker and their landholdings greater, their spiritual life became thinner. Some innocent people suffered, too, of course.

To be continued next month

Glenn Blackstone officiating. Interment was in Carson Valley Cemetery, Duncansville, Pa.

Faus: Anna G. Faus, born Oct. 3, 1898, the daughter of Albert and Annie (Gibble) Faus, died Jan. 30. She is survived by one brother, Henry G. Faus; and seven sisters, Sadie Flory, Nora Herr, Bertha Myer, Esther White, Florence Meyer, Ruth Wolgemuth, and Verna Ginder. She had resided at the Dunkard Brethren Home in Mt. Hope, Pa., for 16 years and was a member of the Speedwell Heights Brethren in Christ Church. The funeral service was held at the Mastersonville Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Keith Tyson of Speedwell Heights officiating. Interment was in the church cemetery.

Fink: Harry A. Fink, born Aug. 5, 1887, a son of Abraham and Elizabeth (Miller) Fink, died Feb. 7. He married Minnie A. Ritchey in 1908. She preceded him in death in 1977, as did a daughter, M. Fern Weaver, in 1951. Surviving are a daughter, Margaret A. Miller; 8 grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren; and a great-great-granddaughter. Elder Fink served for a number of years as a minister of the Brethren in Christ Church. During retirement years, Harry served as a receptionist for his grandson at the S. Gerald Weaver Funeral Home, Woodbury, Pa. The funeral service was held at the funeral home with Rev. Earl E. Herr, Rev. Preston C. Parthemer, Rev. Darleigh B. Replogle, Dr. Henry A. Ginder, and Bishop Frank H. Kipe officiating. Interment was in Replogle Cemetery.



Tribute

A host of relatives and friends celebrated the home-going of Rev. Harry A. Fink on Feb. 10, 1988. Brother Fink's ministry as pastor and evangelist in Central Pennsylvania goes back to the early 1930s. Through dynamic evangelistic preaching, prayer, and sacrifice he, with his wife, was instrumental in starting several mission points: Saxton, Sherman's Valley, Mountain Chapel, Clear Creek, and Blandburg. The story of these great revival days is documented in the recent book *Fire in the Mountains* by Dr. E. Morris Sider.

Brother Fink was a highly respected man in the Martinsburg/Woodbury area. When he became a Christian, he went all out for God. His deep and sincere prayer life put fire into his preaching. A student of the Bible, he was devoted to proclaiming the whole counsel of God. He loved the church and the doctrines she emphasized and taught. He and his wife were unselfish, loving and caring, displaying the beautiful gift of Christian hospitality. He left a spiritual legacy of the highest order to four generations who lived to see this man of God.

Bishop H. Frank Kipe,
for the Board of Bishops

Goins: Louis F. Goins, born Oct. 29, 1917, in Oklahoma City, died Feb. 17. Louis attended Beulah College Academy and the Brethren in Christ Church as a young man. He had made his home recently with his sister, Janna Goins. He is survived by three sons, Raymond, Gale, and Ronald; two sisters; and four brothers. The funeral was conducted by Rev. John Snook and Rev. Alvin C. Burkholder. Entombment was in Bellevue Mausoleum.

Good: H. Susanna Good, born Sept. 13, 1902, died Feb. 23. Surviving are two daughters, H. Marie and Jean L. Troutman; a son, Leonard D., four grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren.

Mrs. Good was the widow of Leonard D. Good. She attended Free Grace Brethren in Christ Church. The funeral was held at the Hoover Funeral Home, Millersburg, Pa., with Rev. Charles Burgard and Rev. Luke Keefer officiating. Interment was in Maple Grove Cemetery, Elizabethtown, Pa.

Helfrick: Annie R. Helfrick, born Aug. 27, 1899, died Feb. 5. Surviving are 3 daughters, Anna M. Stepler, Martha Shives, and Bertha Lehman; 7 sons, Isaac, Asa, Samuel, Lester, Ralph, Robert, and John; 52 grandchildren; 47 great-grandchildren; a great-great-grandchild; and a sister, Mary Garling. Annie was a member of the Montgomery Brethren in Christ Church, near Upton, Pa., where the funeral was held with Rev. Lorne Lichty officiating. Interment was in Cedar Hill Cemetery, Greencastle, Pa.

Hercher: Elizabeth Hercher, born Aug. 21, 1892, died Jan. 26. Her husband, Gerald, preceded her in death 11 years ago. She was the oldest member of the Heise Hill, Ont., congregation. The funeral was held at Baker-Cober Church in Vaughn with Rev. Kenneth Smith and Rev. Marlin Ressler officiating. Interment was in the adjoining cemetery.

Leshner: Arthur M. Leshner, born Jan. 17, 1900, died Jan. 30. Surviving are a nephew, Wade G. Burkholder; two great-nephews; and a great-niece. Arthur resided at Messiah Village and was a member of the Montgomery Brethren in Christ Church, near Upton, Pa., where the funeral was held with Rev. Lorne Lichty and Rev. Russell Martin officiating. Interment was in the church cemetery.

Myers: David L. Myers, born Dec. 20, 1929, the son of Irvin G. and Marie (Messick) Myers, died Feb. 11. Surviving is his mother. David attended Messiah College, received a B.A. in education at Elizabethtown College, and a Master's of Administration from Temple University. He was assistant principal of Mainland High School, Linwood, N.J. and a member of the Elizabethtown, Pa., Brethren in Christ Church where the funeral was held. Interment was at Mount Tunnel Cemetery.

Schreiber: Rheba S. Schreiber, born July 5, 1903, in Abilene, Ks., died Jan. 27. Surviving are a son, Harold Bell, Sr.; three grandsons; six great-grandchildren; and a brother, Ervil L. Kaskey. Rheba was a member of the Free Grace Brethren in Christ Church. She was a retired practical nurse. The funeral was held in the Reinhard Funeral Home, Millersburg, Pa., with Rev. C. R. Burgard officiating. Interment was in Riverview Memorial Gardens, Halifax, Pa.

Weidenmoyer: Charles S. Weidenmoyer, born June 28, 1901, in Souderton, Pa., died Dec. 25. He is survived by a sister, Laura Swenk. Charles was a member of the Silverdale, Pa., Brethren in Christ Church where the funeral was held with Rev. Omer E. King officiating. Interment was in the church cemetery.

Wingert: Levi B. Wingert, born Aug. 13, 1905, died Feb. 6. Surviving are his wife, Ruth (Ebersole) Wingert; 2 daughters, Grace Thrush and Lois Ocker; a son, David; 2 stepsons, Richard Myers and Glen Myers; 3 stepdaughters, Rachel Sullivan, Sharon Shock, and Karen Thrush; 19 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; and 11 step-grandchildren. Levi was a member of the Antrim Brethren in Christ Church, Chambersburg, Pa., where services were held with Rev. Charles Byers, Rev. Devon Bontrager, and Rev. Joe Baer officiating. Interment was in the Antrim cemetery.

Messiah College News

Engineering to become four-year program at Grantham

At a special meeting of the Messiah College Board of Trustees February 5, final approval was given for the implementation of a four-year engineering program at Messiah's Grantham campus, culminating five years of research and discussion on the subject.

Although Messiah has offered engineering for several years by requiring that the junior and senior years be spent on its Philadelphia campus located at Temple University, relatively few students have completed the program. Redefining its position of leadership among Christian liberal arts colleges, Messiah will expand its main campus facilities, faculty, and student body as the new engineering program is added.

Messiah College President Dr. D. Ray Hostetter cites three primary advantages of offering engineering at the main campus. First, it will set Messiah apart from other major evangelical colleges. Second, engineering students and faculty will bring to the college community a unique perspective and way of looking at the world.

Third, President Hostetter notes that an engineering program will allow Messiah to address a pressing need of today's church. "One of the greatest challenges facing Christians today is to bring the good news of the gospel to bear on technological problems," the president said. "And yet, engineering education is a field of study that Christian colleges have left virtually untouched. While an engineering program at Messiah won't address all the world's needs, it can provide a model of God's people making a difference in a high-tech world."

Candidates are now being interviewed for the position of Engineering Department Chairman. Hopefully, students will be able to enroll in the new program beginning in the fall of 1989.

Spanish, physical therapy majors revised

In addition to the plans for engineering, two majors at Messiah have recently been reshaped. Students majoring in Spanish have been spending their first

two years at Grantham and their last two years at the Philadelphia campus. However, students may now stay at the Grantham campus all four years, with the exception of a semester at the University of Barcelona, Spain, through the Brethren Colleges Abroad program. It is recommended students spend their entire junior year in Barcelona.

The second program revision concerns pre-physical therapy majors. Because of the growing trend for hospitals to require entry-level physical therapists to have a master's degree, Messiah is encouraging its students in this area to follow one of two options.

First, students may follow Messiah's B.S. curriculum in biology for three years at Grantham, and if admitted into Temple's three-year physical therapy program, transfer to Temple at the start of their fourth year. Upon successful completion of the first year of Temple's program, a B.S. degree in biology from Messiah College will be awarded. After successfully completing the last two years in the Temple program, the university will award a Master of Physical Therapy degree.

The second option, a four-plus-two format as opposed to the three-plus-three format above, calls for Messiah students to earn their B.S. in either biology or chemistry, and then apply to an institution which offers a two-year Master of Physical Therapy program.

For more information on Messiah's pre-physical therapy program, contact Department of Natural Sciences Chairman, Dr. Noel Falk.

Brethren in Christ students named to "Who's Who"

Four Brethren in Christ students are among those from Messiah selected to be listed in the 1988 edition of *Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges*. Campus nominating committees selected students based on their academic achievement, service to the community, leadership in extracurricular activities, and potential for continued success.

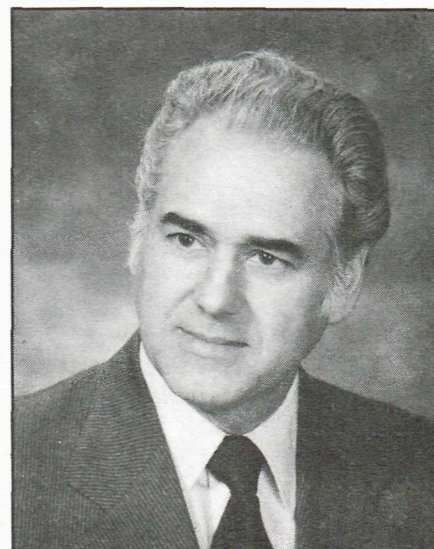
Those selected are: *Kathy Ann Be-secker*, junior early childhood education major from Waynesboro, Pa.; *Winifred S. Brubaker*, senior elementary education major from Arcanum, Ohio (Fairview congregation); *Timothy J. H. Day*, senior family studies major from Ridgeway, Ont. (Sherkston congregation); and *Carol A. Peterman*, senior elementary education major from Manheim, Pa. (Mainheim congregation).

Dr. Myron Augsburger to speak at Commencement

Dr. Myron Augsburger, recently appointed President of the Christian College Coalition, has been chosen to speak at Messiah's 78th annual Commencement to be held at 10:00 a.m. Saturday, May 14, in the Hitchcock Arena of Soltenberger Sports Center. Tickets are required and are available from members of the graduating class.

Dr. Augsburger is the former President and Professor of Theology at Eastern Mennonite College and Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va., and is pastor of Washington Community Fellowship, a young, interdenominational congregation in Washington, D.C. He also leads evangelistic crusades throughout the world with Inter-Church Crusades.

He will address a graduating class



numbering approximately 400, the largest ever at Messiah.



Dean Brandt to become Provost at Bethel College

Messiah will experience a great loss this summer when Dr. H. David Brandt, Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the College, resigns after 11 years to become Provost at Bethel College in St. Paul, Minn.

Dr. Brandt has been responsible for the hiring of more than half of the present Messiah faculty, always maintaining a focus for academic excellence as the college has roughly doubled its enrollment since he arrived in 1977. Among the several thousand graduates to receive a diploma with his signature are his wife Melva, son and daughter-in-law David and Diane, and after next month, younger son Steve.

"Dave has worked tirelessly for excellence in the academic program, encouraging faculty and students alike in their scholarly pursuits," President Hostetter said. "We are sorry to lose him to Bethel, but wish him well in his new avenue of service."

Starting July 1, Dr. Brandt will be responsible for academics as well as student development and spiritual life at Bethel. A search committee has been formed to select his replacement at Messiah. The President's office welcomes nominations of qualified candidates from friends of the college.

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The Karlsschule, the oldest Protestant school in Vienna, Austria, was gutted during World War II. Spirited Mennonite and Brethren peace volunteers rebuilt it inside and out. Service in the spirit of reconciliation has been the pattern for MCC volunteers since MCC's beginning.

Onesimus

To my faithful brother and friend, Paul,

I urgently need your advice concerning the "politics" in our region. I have described to you in previous letters the workings of the government system here called "democracy," where all citizens have a right (at least theoretically) to participate in the actions and policies of the authorities. I won't repeat that information here. The issue I must hear from you on concerns the advice you might give me and my brothers and sisters as we seek to live and witness within this system.

This year we are in what the media describes as "a political year" that is, a year in which many men (no women have yet braved this contest) attempt to convince large numbers of their fellow citizens to name them as president. My concern is this: religion has become an important factor in this contest. The Christians here desire to vote for a Christian candidate.

Oh Paul, total separatism doesn't seem to be an effective witness. We cannot take the gospel to the corners of the earth if we are cloistered from our society. But this political Christianity is a hoax! If we have a duty within this democratic system to vote intelligently, to vote in a godly fashion, what are we to do? Is this even possible?

Let me describe to you what I find to be a relevant contrast on this subject. The last two presidents in this region have been very different. First there was Jimmy Carter. In my opinion, Mr. Carter's Christianity was genuine. His poli-

tics were colored by his theology: a care for the poor (he did take the Third World seriously; others had not); an understanding of our Father's care for all people (he did not take it for granted that Americans have a right to use far more than our share of the world's goods on our comforts, while others starve); a view honoring the universality of the brotherhood in Christ (he refused to view the Soviets as "evil" while only the Americans are "good"; he knew there are believers among the Soviets). Mr. Carter has flaws and his presidency has flaws, but that is not the point.

Let me continue my contrast. The current president is Ronald Reagan. He defeated Mr. Carter resoundingly in the election. Mr. Reagan's religion is vastly different from Mr. Carter. President Reagan consults his horoscope every day, regularly carries five or so lucky charms in his pocket, and is keenly interested in paranormal religious experiences. This is all according to Michael Deaver, one of his key assistants. Yet it was Carter whom this country, including many Christians, considered weird.

Reagan's god is not opposed to the view that Americans are preferred over God's other creatures. It is not a problem to pursue war for the cause of preserving "the American way of life." Reagan's god makes no demands, at least not for repentance or humility on a national level (or a personal level either, one might guess). This god may require money for larger defense spending, but would never cause anyone to question

the morality of the killing of millions of innocents that would result were that defense implemented as promised. Reagan's god makes Americans feel good. And this gets votes, many of them Christian votes. The message here seems to be that a religion that is not taken too seriously is better.

The current crop of candidates are lined up on either side of many political issues, but they all play carefully with their religion. One such hopeful is Pat Robertson, who comes to the political arena after building a Christian broadcasting network. He now has to be careful not to appear too religious. He wouldn't want people afraid that he believes too seriously, so he quotes Machiavelli and does his best to appear secular.

Paul, it's silly to think that we can tell one another in the body of Christ how to vote. But there's a leaning in that direction that is frightening to me. How am I to help my people sort their way through this maze? What advice would you give? The comfort-loving god who gets votes is so far from the Consuming Fire we serve. The America-first god must be challenged if we are to be faithful witnesses to the gospel of Jesus Christ. But what does that mean? The bare minimum must be that we speak the truth over and over again: "For God so loved the world . . ." not only our country. Please add your wisdom on this subject. I remain your servant,

Onesimus

Phoebe's Journal

"Who was I to think that I could oppose God!"

In Acts 10 and 11, Luke records the dramatic and fascinating account of Peter's change of heart regarding the Gentiles. Before his vision on Simon the Tanner's rooftop, Peter believed that the gospel was only for the Jews. But his

vision and subsequent visit to the house of Cornelius convinced him that "God does not show favoritism but accepts [those] from every nation who fear him and do what is right" (10:35). Later in Jerusalem when he faced the criticism of Jewish believers, Peter told his story and concluded: "So if God gave them [the Gentiles] the same gift he gave us, who believed the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could oppose God!" (11:17)

At the risk of wrenching Peter's state-

ment out of context and making it say something it doesn't, I'd like to suggest that his conclusion could just as well be applied to the issue of women in the ministry. The January 1988 *Visitor* carried a news item about the "first woman to be ordained to a North American ministry by the Brethren in Christ Church" since 1921. I rejoiced when I read that! Parenthetically, however, the story notes that the 1921 ordination "was not fully accepted by the denomination as a whole." I fervently hope that

Readers may correspond with both Phoebe and Onesimus by writing to them c/o the **Evangelical Visitor**, P.O. Box 166, Napanee, IN 46550.

the same will not be true again, in 1988. Will we this time be able to apply Peter's principle and agree that God often gives women the same gifts he gives men—not only the gift of the Holy Spirit, but also the gifts required for pastoral ministry or church leadership?

I confess that I am angry when I hear about people who, for example, leave the church because a woman is ordained or who choose not to attend a worship service when a woman is preaching. I feel like I've been slapped—and I'm not even one of the women in question. People who respond that way believe that women in the pastoral or preaching ministry is unbiblical, and they argue that the church is losing its scriptural foundations and bowing to cultural pressure when it grants women equal access to the ministry. They are generally sincere in their convictions.

But is it appropriate to be angry at convictions which are different from mine? I think that anger rising out of hurt and frustration (which is what this is) is normal, but I wonder what it accomplishes. I fear that raising the questions I do and expressing my anger and hurt will be seen as just so much ranting and raving. I don't want people to think I'm an "angry woman." Would it be better to be careful about how openly I express anger and disappointment at negative attitudes toward women in ministry and instead continue to work quietly in my own areas of ministry?

That's a tension I live with daily. Some women choose to be more outspoken about what they perceive to be injustices, and some choose to model competence and effectiveness in ministry and patiently wait for change. It seems to me that both choices are valid—and necessary. As one of those women, I sometimes choose to act one way and sometimes the other. My problem comes in knowing when to do which.

I also don't know what to do with the chasm that separates those who interpret the Bible as being opposed to women in the ministry and those who don't. I agree with theologians who say that when Paul told women to be quiet in church and not teach, he was speaking to specific cultural situations and not making universal theological and moral statements. Others, however, take Paul at face value, and therein lies the problem. I understand Onesimus' dilemma in the February *Visitor* when he wonders about how unity happens when there is great disagreement over issues like this. I want to respect people who disagree with me, especially when they do so out of strong and sincere convictions. But I still hurt, and I can't understand why God would gift and call women to leadership ministries if he didn't want them to use the gifts and follow the call.

Back to Peter and his response to Cornelius: When he saw what the Lord had done in and through Cornelius, Peter was convinced that God gifts people in ways he didn't know about. He changed his whole attitude. I believe that the same thing can happen and indeed is happening regarding women in ministry—God has gifted and called many women and men in various ways and no one should stand in the way of those gifts being used to serve God.

Phoebe

Readers Respond

Nurturing role

I appreciate Bishop Glenn Ginder's article on the back page of the February issue. Ministry journals and magazines have been laying heavy emphasis on pastoral and congregational perspectives. It's so nice to see that the *Visitor* can play a role in nurturing Brethren in Christ pastor/congregation relations. I wish we would do this on a regular basis.

Thanks a lot!

Steve Russell
Mifflintown, Pa.

Give me "King James"

I am so glad some friends sent in my subscription for the *Visitor*. I can remember when it was offered for \$10 for a lifetime. My brother-in-law was living with us then and he subscribed for it.

There have been many changes since then, but praise the Lord, he never changes—even when some try to change his Word, the Bible. Give me "King James version."

Esther Brauen
Arcade, N.Y.

Editor's note: Recently a reader wrote to critique several features of the magazine. We probably would have printed the letter, but it was unsigned. Our stated policy is to consider only signed letters for publication. However, as we have noted before, there are occasions when we understand why a writer may ask us to withhold his or her name. Generally we are able to honor such a request.



Pontius' Puddle

Bulletins and newsletters reprinting "Pontius' Puddle" from the *Visitor* must pay \$10 for each use to Joel Kauffmann, 111 Carter Road, Goshen, IN 46526.



They tore down the church this week.

At least, part of it. The new sanctuary and the old one had stood side by side these many years along the main highway through town—the new, a testimony to vision and growth; the old (temporarily converted into classrooms), a distinguished reminder of the foundations of the past. Now the old lies in a heap of bricks and dust. What once were stately pillars lie dismembered. The round copper dome no longer reflects the crisp March sunshine's rays.

Some old things need to meet their demise. If they cry out in ugliness, or injustice, or ignorance, they need to go. Yet, when the old gives way to the sparkling new, something *is* lost—the laughter of generations of children playing tag around those church pillars; the tears of the bereaved on the altar of death; the echoes of Wesleyan preaching poured into hearts now gone on. The building was not the church. It only housed the church. Yet somehow the heritage and the people have now slipped farther beyond our grasp.

A few years ago, a bathroom badly in need of remodeling in our very old house also met its end. At one point, after a jerk of the crowbar, out cascaded hundreds of rusted razor blades placed through a slit in the wall by some unknown shaver. We stood in amused amazement at the hidden legacy of this mystery person. Little did he know that his secret habit of disposing of the blades would be revealed decades later to our young family. Did he ever imagine that we would wonder who he was, what he looked like, what kind of person he was?

Fascination with the past seems to be the common denominator in my feelings about both the church and the razor blades. As I grow older, I feel more and more of a need to understand and value the past—not just my own, but the heritage upon which the lives of others are built. Along with this fascination comes the realization that some of the things (values, lifestyle, traditions, etc.) my generation has built or will build may become relics, the subject of mystery for the generations to come. I have also started to believe that unless we make an effort to stay mentally young, we all reach a point of needing to justify the thoughts or practices of “our” generation, unwilling to adjust to the present and the future, unwilling to allow progress for the good.

April 1988

Old purposes—new forms

It has to be hard for the ones still living who had worshipped in that regal church—now hauled off to the dump—to see the building go. Part of themselves—their memories—went with it. Likewise, it is hard for some in our brotherhood to acknowledge that change is upon us. In these years of doctrinal revisions, changes in Brethren in Christ emphases, even changes in this magazine, the hearts of some are torn at the reality or prospect of change. Our very beings, it may seem, are falling to the ground as violently as that church crumbled under the wrecker's ball.

Yet, if we believe that God is truly in command of history, we need to be able to confront change with dignity and compassion. We need to trust our brothers and sisters. Admitting our desire to control, we must release our fears to the power of the God who knows how to create change for the better without losing the good from the past.

We experience a real sense of lostness at times when trying to reconcile the past and the future. But dealing with present currents of change seems easier when we consider Ephesians 2:19-22: “You are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people [regardless of generation!] and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Jesus Christ himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.”

What a reason for assurance! I now look at the space where that old church stood and can see there a testimony to the Master Builder's continuing hand in the lives of his people. Soon, a new Christian education wing will rise on that spot, the old purposes in a resurrected form. In fact, the stained glass windows and much of the beautiful woodwork from the original structure will be integrated into the new building. God's plan goes on. God is still—and always—in control of the future. He is the source of vision and change, but will not allow his Truth to be destroyed.

HJ



The Nappanee United Methodist Church (above), before the old sanctuary was torn down (front cover). The new sanctuary is visible on the left. Photos by longtime member Ruth Jo Eppley.

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Bishops' Column

Peter and the resurrection

by H. Frank Kipe

The Apostle Peter walked and talked with Jesus for over three years. Still he was confused and uncertain about the real purpose of Jesus' coming to earth. Erdman suggests there are two fundamental and supreme doctrines of Christianity. One, the truth concerning the divine person of Jesus Christ the Son of God. The other, understanding the atoning work of Christ. Are we, perhaps, as confused as Peter?

Matthew 16:13-20 records a dialogue between Jesus and his disciples about these fundamentals. Peter is spokesman for the disciples—nothing new. The setting is important: Caesarea Philippi, away from the crowds and isolated from the familiar Jewish culture, religious tradition, and rulers who were seeking Jesus' life. Two questions were posed by Jesus: one, a privilege to answer, the second, a threat to the disciples' commitment to Jesus. Jesus had asked, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" The reply was a relatively honorable one that included a reincarnation concept, not too surprisingly. Then Jesus asked, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God." Had he been quiet he likely could have saved the Christian Church elders a lot of debate the last nineteen hundred years. Nevertheless, it was said and it was true.

The big surprise comes at the end. Jesus charged (a very strong word) his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ. Why was this? Didn't the Jews need to know who he really was? Didn't the Gentiles need to know? Yes! But, wait, listen!

Up to this point, the disciples, and even the believing Jews, perceived Jesus to be the Messiah, Savior, King. The liberator, miracle worker, a physical, political Savior. They had not yet grasped the truth of the divine person of Christ nor his forthcoming atoning work. Thus, if they had preached their Christ, he would have been very inferior, not the Redeeming Christ, Suffering Servant, Living Lord.

From that time forth, Jesus began to show his disciples who he really was. He spoke to them of his suffering, rejection, crucifixion, and then resurrection. Upon hearing this, Peter rebuked (another strong word) Jesus and declared, "This cannot happen to you, Lord." How could he ever rebuke Christ, yet call him *Lord*? He could, because he was so much like you and me in understanding.

Then Jesus went on to share some eternal truth regarding crosses, life, death, and eternity. His purpose was to prepare a few disciples with shaky commitments to observe and understand his need to suffer and die. This was followed by frequent references to his resurrection.

It was not until after the disciples had experienced several appearances of Jesus following his resurrection that they recounted and recorded these teachings. Even then, they hid behind locked doors, in fear of the consequences if they shared the resurrection story with others.

Before Jesus' final departure and ascension into heaven, he had another encounter with Peter by the seashore in Galilee. Peter had led several disciples out for a fling at their old fishing trade. A fruitless (actually fishless) night left them discouraged. Early in the morning, as they returned to shore in empty boats, Jesus (not recognized by the disciples) called from shore and told them to cast their nets on the right side of the boat. Success returned and they were over-

whelmed. They acknowledged that the stranger must be the risen Christ. Jesus invited them to shore with their catch and to a breakfast he had waiting for them.

After they all dined, Jesus inquired of Peter three times if he loved him (matching Peter's thrice denial of Christ during his suffering). Following Peter's affirmative response, Jesus said, "Now go and feed my lambs and my sheep." On the day of Pentecost, Peter's selfishness and doubt were replaced with the resurrection power of Christ. His mind and heart were charged with the knowledge and power of the Holy Spirit. The real Christ, resurrected, was understood. His atonement and spiritual kingdom replaced Peter's earlier hope of an earthly king. Now he had, not *something*, but *someone* to share with all men. He began his preaching of the Resurrection. (Acts 1-4):

Friends, if the resurrection of our Lord has not affected our lives, it won't affect our witness. If it doesn't affect our mind, it won't affect our message. If it hasn't empowered our spirit, it won't empower our sermons. If it doesn't create faith for our life, it won't bring any hope in our death. Let us trust Jesus, honor his resurrection reality and heed Peter's final words to us: 2 Peter 3:17-18, "Dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not fall . . . But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."



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Evangelical Visitor